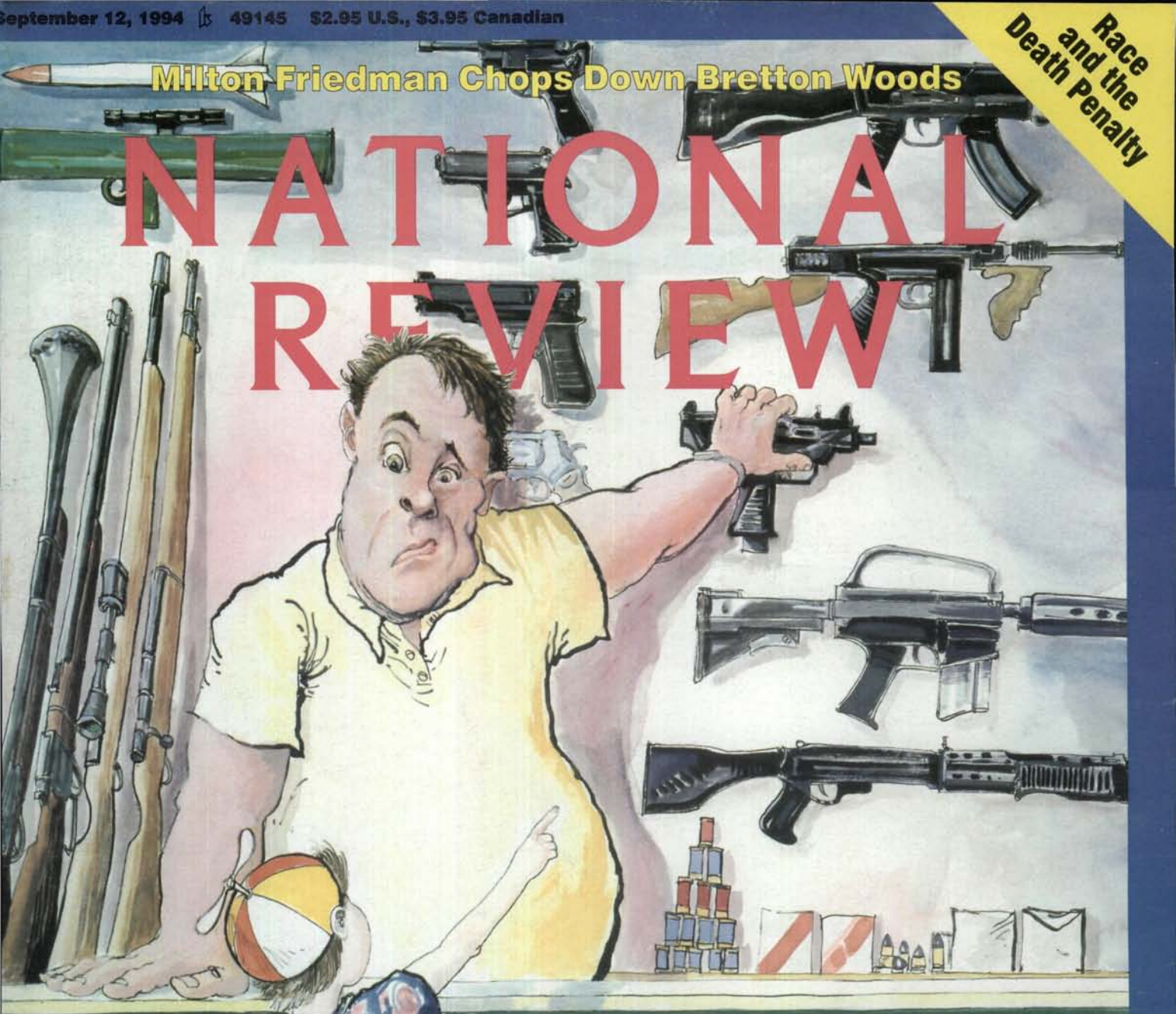
September 12, 1994 49145 $2.95 U.S., $3.95 Canadian

Race and the Death Penalty

Milton Friedman Chops Down Bretton Woods

NATIONAL REVIEW



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NATIONAL REVIEW

SEPTEMBER 12, 1994 VOL. XLVI, NO. 17

Special Section

40 ***School Wars: American Education under Siege***
Tracy Lee Simmons teaches virtue to college students, **Ramesh Ponnuru** dissects outcome-based education, **David Boaz** strategizes for school choice, **Thomas J. Murphy** exposes the folly of "mainstreaming" severely handicapped children, **Regna Lee Wood** describes the abuse of special ed, and **Hadley Arkes** explores the state of moral debate on campus.

Articles

21 ***On the Scene***
Liberal intransigence may yet save Americans from big-government health care, muses **Rich Lowry**. . . . If you go to San Francisco, warns **Robert L. Gaskin**, be sure not to pee on the sidewalk. . . . **Conor Cruise O'Brien** wonders how many will die from the IRA's peace. . . . Amid the mud at Woodstock '94, **Todd Seavey** searches for peace and harmony—mostly in vain.

32 ***Free-Floating Anxiety***
Milton Friedman finds more nostalgia than logic in the eulogies for Bretton Woods.

64 ***The Pope's Population Problem***
Pope John Paul II won't win his fight against population control on moral grounds, says **William McGurn**, unless he fights it on economic grounds as well.

68 ***Discredit Line***
Jacob Sullum wishes journalists were as good at following the arguments as they are at following the money.

72 ***Innocents on Death Row?***
Stephen Markman uncovers a miscarriage of scholarship. . . . Murderers may discriminate, argues **J. Daryl Charles**, but the death penalty doesn't.

Books, Arts & Manners

78 In *The Evolution of Racism* Pat Shipman calls for freedom to ask questions about racial differences: and then blinks, says **Mark Snyderman**; while Phillipe Rushton asks and answers them in *Race, Evolution, and Behavior* (and may live to regret it). . . . In Dorothy Wickenden's *The New Republic Reader*, **Colin Welch** finds the magazine's considerable virtues and honesty about its vices. . . . Peter Robinson has written a book on Stanford Business School called *Snapshots from Hell*; "heck" is more like it, says **Neal B. Freeman**. . . . **Matthew Scully** considers some light fare on near-death experiences. . . . **James Gardner** ponders whether Bret Easton Ellis, on the evidence of *The Informers*, is One of Us. . . . Hollywood sentimentality, says **John Simon**, beats independent films' pretensions any day.

96 ***The Misanthrope's Corner***
Florence King misses the strong, silent type.

Sections

2 ***Letters***
4 ***From the Editor***
5 ***For the Record***
6 ***The Week***
30 ***Random Walk***
37 ***Letter from Al***
38 hel
89 ***Books in Brief***
93 ***Trans-O-Gram***
94 ***On the Right***

Cover illustration by Jeff Fisher

The Audit Bureau

NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by National Review, Inc., at 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. ©National Review, Inc., 1994. Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc. to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc. to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668; phone, 815-734-1232, Monday–Friday, 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., National Review, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668. Printed in the U.S.A.

RATES: $57.00 a year (25 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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Letters

Cuban Health Care—No Thanks

John O'Sullivan ["From the Editor," Aug. 29] poses the rhetorical question: "But when did someone last fly to Cuba for an operation?"

This question can be answered. In August 1985, the leftist dictator of Guyana, Forbes Burnham, flew to Cuba to receive treatment for his heart trouble. Not for him the capitalist clinics of Miami. Shortly thereafter he returned home in a casket. I think it fair to say that this incident was the last one in which propagandists for Cuban medicine made the mistake of taking their own speeches seriously.

Elliott Abrams
Washington, D.C.

Dismissal or Hope?

George Weigel and Bill Kristol's suggestion that the Republican Party should junk its abortion plank and replace it with a five-hundred-word essay ["The Abortion Plank: Life and the Republican Party," Aug.15] should make us grateful that they were not around to advise Thomas Jefferson on the composition of the Declaration of Independence.

I can hear them now:

"Tom, if you say 'endowed by our Creator,' you will alienate the atheists. If you mention 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' there go the serial killers, slave owners, and Calvinists. Let's put it this way:

" 'We reaffirm our commitment to endowing most of us, some day, with life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We regard the absence of these things as a great tragedy. We recognize the need for an extensive and ongoing process of public persuasion. We support efforts to return to the people these rights. We endorse legislative efforts to expand rights in this direction. We salute the dedicated women and men who are alive, free, and trying to be happy.' "

If Jefferson had bought this, the Minutemen would have cut and run at Bunker Hill, Valley Forge would have emptied at the first frost, and it would have been Cornwallis who received Washington's sword.

Messrs. Weigel and Kristol's pro-life strategy is thoughtful and eloquent. Their purpose in espousing it, though, is to quietly dump the issue.

It won't work. We Republicans who believe in it will no longer vote for Republicans who don't.

Paul Harig
Frankfort, Ill.

At last there is *hope* for America. George Weigel and Bill Kristol have come up with the answer to turn our country around from its downhill course. As they make clear, in order to restore the Constitution as the law of the land, the Republicans must work to change the cultural environment.

The article is magnificent. Congratulations! If we Republicans implement this message we once again will return to being the greatest nation on earth.

Irene M. Keating
Marlborough, N.H.

PC Airwaves

I read John Merline's "Fund Repeal" [June 27] with great interest.

National Public Radio has endless room in its heart, and its broadcasts, for its litany of favored victims, which emphatically does not include the conservative majority and the Catholic Church. There are the migrant farm workers in California, the survivors of the Rosewood, Florida, burning, every woman in Pennsylvania (who now has to wait 24 hours for an abortion), gay and lesbian teens in public schools, rain forests, domestic partners, welfare recipients, African-American television viewers (who will have three fewer black programs to watch this fall), African-American cowboys, and, last but not least, all black women. On July 1, 1994, *Morning Edition* aired "a black woman's perspective" on the O. J. Simpson case. She stated that black women collectively were feeling rejected because O. J. dumped his black wife and thereafter dated (and married) white women exclusively. She went on to state that the Los Angeles cops, faced with a black man accused of killing a white woman, are "mad as hell" that they cannot lynch him.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting received more than $300 million in federal appropriations (i.e., taxpayer dollars) in 1992, according to its annual report. Of that, $5,270,531.00 went to the radio program fund; $14,995,120.00 went to national radio program production and acquisition; and $38,802,489.00 went to radio community-services grants. The last dollar figure represents grants from the CPB to local radio stations. These local stations then use that money, in part, to pay their annual dues to NPR. According to its annual report, membership dues from local stations accounted for more than half of NPR's revenues ($25,618,455.00) in 1992.

In 1992, Congress threatened to freeze the CPB's reauthorization because of the leftward tilt to its programming. Nothing has changed since those threats two years ago. The CPB and NPR have had their chance—now is the time to act.

For the sake of principle and the conservative majority in this country, which is fed up with supporting the liberal agenda on the public airwaves, *cut them off!*

Caroline L. Feeney
Emerald Isle, N.C.

"Fund Repeal" contains the erroneous statement: "*Frontline* aired two documentaries about the coming ravages of the greenhouse effect, but then rejected a highly praised British documentary debunking greenhouse hysteria." When we called John Merline, he said that the mistake was an editor's error. The article he submitted stated that these documentaries were broadcast by PBS, not *Frontline*.

Marrie Campbell
Frontline
Boston, Mass.

NR *regrets the editorial error and apologizes to Mr. Merline and to* Frontline.
—ED.

Who's a Democrat?

I am absolutely shocked and appalled at the ferocity of your attack on Congressman Jack Fields. In "Highway Cops" [Aug. 15], Robert Stowe England refers to him as "Jack Fields (D., Tex.)." What a vicious thing to write! Have you no sense of honor and decency? Congressman Fields is, and I believe always has been, a Republican. Your error has discredited a decent man and brought dishonor to his family. I urge you to retract your savage attack.

Mark N. Blackwell
Houston, Tex.

The "D." was an editorial mistake. Our apologies to Mr. England and to Congressman Fields. —ED.

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September 12 issue; printed August 24

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FROM THE EDITOR

Déjà Views

The Palace Hotel, Gstaad

■ I was staying in Taki's favorite hotel two years ago, helping Mrs. Thatcher to polish her memoirs, when Vice President Ganic of Bosnia arrived to brief her on Serbia's war against Bosnia, then in its early stages. He had flown directly from besieged Sarajevo to this serene Swiss village, and Mrs. Thatcher, guessing his privations, laid out sandwiches and cakes for him.

To her surprise, Mr. Ganic refused all sustenance, scarcely glancing at the table as he vividly described the conditions of siege, the swarms of refugees, the fast-changing military situation, and the West's diplomatic aloofness.

But when Mrs. Thatcher was called away to the telephone, he gulped down a plate of sandwiches in seconds. Now we must have looked surprised. He explained it was his first decent meal in months. He could not trust himself to eat it properly in front of her.

Even before Mr. Ganic's arrival, Mrs. Thatcher had drafted her *New York Times* article calling for, among other things, the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia. His account of the horrors of Sarajevo confirmed her opinion rather than changing it. But it fired her into a personal crusade.

Two years later, we are back in the same hotel suite working on a second volume. Outside, Switzerland remains serene. And the television news reports that the Bosnian Serbs have rejected a U.S.-fostered peace plan and that this may finally force the U.S. to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia.

■ *Déjà vu* also for President Clinton, who two years ago had favored lifting the embargo. Since then he has opposed doing so, then favored it again, and most recently happened to be of two minds when the Serbs said no and the music stopped.

The main objection to lifting the embargo was that it would only lead to "a level killing field." The embargo avoided this outcome not by reducing the killing, but by ensuring that the well-armed Serb aggressors would have an edge in killing over the ill-equipped Bosnian defenders.

A nice judgment—falling short of handing the Serbs an outright victory but helping them to seize about three-quarters of Bosnia—yet not nice enough. Three-quarters is now thought excessive reward for aggression.

So it is U.S. policy to persuade the Bosnian Serbs to withdraw voluntarily from *some* territory. Gratitude being notoriously scarce, they refuse to do so. If they continue obdurate, we will finally lift the embargo.

That will probably enable the Bosnians to reverse the Serb gains. Of course, in the two years since Mr. Ganic and Mrs. Thatcher asked for arms so that the Bosnians might defend themselves, about 200,000 of them have been killed.

But not in a level way.

■ Meanwhile, another election promise is embarrassing Mr. Clinton. He had originally advocated admitting Haitian refugees—so, naturally, he kept them out.

Then, when TransAfrica's Randall Robinson staged a hunger strike in protest, Mr. Clinton took a bold stand. He urged Mr. Robinson to keep up the pressure until the President gave way. He did, and he did.

Caught between keeping the Haitians out (and losing the support of the Black Caucus) and letting them in (and losing Florida), the President hit on a compromise. He would invade Haiti, "install democracy," and so keep out Haitians with a clear conscience.

Then, a riot in Havana provoked Fidel Castro into letting discontented Cubans (i.e., Cubans) board ships to the U.S. Will Mr. Clinton now invade Cuba as well as Haiti? Or both? Or neither?

Invading Haiti while the Cubans are invading America is quite a likely climax to these antics, and it would admittedly have the virtue of consistency with the rest of Mr. Clinton's foreign policy.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Unlike other Republicans, Sen. **John Chafee** (R., R.I.) is "sincere" about health reform, says Senate Majority Leader **George Mitchell** (D., Me.). But kudos from Mitchell was about all Chafee got for his effort to make himself hero of state-controlled health care. Sen. **Phil Gramm** (R., Tex.) said Chafee's rump caucus of Senate colleagues, the "mainstream coalition," represents "mainstream Washington," not "mainstream America." Piqued Senate Minority Leader **Bob Dole** (R., Kan.) took to calling Chafee group "the midstream coalition," then "the dry creek coalition." Former mainstream member Sen. **David Boren** (D., Okla.) saw his colleagues being "pulled inextricably leftward" and increasingly likely to give **Clinton** and Mitchell needed votes. Boren's recommendation: "We stop this train right now and get off." Chafee group also attacked from Left by Clinton supporter **Ron Pollack** of Families U.S.A. for being "an exercise in minimalism." But Chafee's "minimalism" includes government-mandated plans and "non-political" national health commission. Mainstream member Sen. **David Durenberger** (R., Minn.), however, is worried that Senate recess might thwart his and Chafee's plans to hand Democrats victory for nationalized health care: "You go home and health reform is dead."

■ Flashes on the Right: Texas hopeful and **Reagan** stalwart **Tex Lezar** may be only lieut.-gov. candidate to become national news this year. Washington media and angry Democrats focused on $1,000 campaign contribution from new Whitewater prosecutor, **Kenneth Starr**, to Lezar, who has been attacking "Clinton Democrats." A former appeals-court judge, Starr tends to be apolitical, but he worked closely with Lezar in Reagan Justice Dept. pushing through '82 organized-crime initiative that ultimately broke power of Cosa Nostra families. . . . **Bill Bennett** is out of the presidential race but *Newsweek* speculates he would answer call for No. 2 spot if **Colin Powell** got GOP nomination. "Their wives are very close," says Bennett family friend. . . . **Rush Limbaugh**—bitterly attacked this summer by angry Clinton, National Education Association, and *New York Times* columnist **Anthony Lewis** (who cites "hateful talk")—getting laugh from dark secret in family of Clinton advisor **James Carville**. New Pinnacle book on Limbaugh, *Rush to Us* by **D. Howard King** and **Geoffrey Morris**, reveals Carville's four sisters are "dittoheads" (Rush fans) and quotes Carville's bride, CNBC talk-show host **Mary Matalin**, as saying "Rush got mobbed at our wedding." . . . GOP presidential hopeful **Lamar Alexander** got strong response after calling—on **Paul Weyrich**'s conservative cable-TV network—for cutting congressional salaries in half and keeping Congress out of Washington for half the year. . . . Rep. **Phil Crane** (R., Ill.) points out in *Los Angeles Times* op-ed piece that 1787 Constitutional Convention overwhelmingly defeated delegate **Charles Pinckney**'s proposal for federal arts funding.

■ Head of Poland's civil intelligence service, **Marian Zacharski**, forced to step down over past as Communist superspy that included stealing U.S.

Phoenix and Patriot missile designs; Poland's left-wing Prime Minister **Waldemar Pawlak** bowed to pressure from President **Lech Walesa**. Former Polish dictator Gen. **Wojciech Jaruzelski** now says he is no longer Communist but retains "values of the Left." Jaruzelski explains: "Actually, in Clinton's program, I see elements I like a lot." . . . Syndicated columnist **Doug Bandow** reports that as Clinton Administration revives **Carter**-era Law of the Sea Treaty (LOST) and asks U.S. Senate for approval, **H. E. Ostrovsky,** legal advisor to the Russian foreign ministry, says his country is opposed to new multilateral boondoggle. . . . Red Chinese Gen. **Xu Huizhi,** linked to '89 Tiananmen Square massacre, got red-carpet treatment from Sec. Def. **William Perry** on Pentagon visit. . . . Germany's Treuhandanstalt, the agency in charge of privatizing over 13,687 state-run companies in former East Germany, has only 147 left to sell. . . . Vatican officials and Muslim leaders making common cause against UN conference on population control in Cairo. Joint statement issued in Rome blasted UN documents that "redefine" traditional family in way "unacceptable to believing Muslims and Christians."

■ Report on Claremont Institute's "Turning Back the Welfare State" conference is must reading, says columnist and former *NR* publisher **Bill Rusher**. Written by **Tom Bethell** and featuring AEI's **Charles Murray** and Harvard's **James Q. Wilson**, report is $5 from Claremont Institute, 250 West First St., Suite 330, Claremont, Calif. 91711. . . . Market alternatives to get an airing at Independent Institute's Sept. 18–19 health-care conference at D.C.'s Washington Court Hotel; featured speakers: Bob Dole, Sen. **John Breaux** (D., La.). Contact **Theresa Snyder**, 510-632-1366. . . . Conservatives of a more *sub specie aeternitatis* stripe could spend that weekend celebrating *Chesterton Review*'s 20th year at St. Michael's College, Toronto. Details: **Louise Girard**, 416-926-7250.

■ Former First Lady **Barbara Bush** tells ABC's *20/20* of disagreement with her husband on abortion. "With **George** it's really against his religion. . . . He thinks it's killing. I don't argue with that. . . . He was always anti-abortion."

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THE WEEK

■ The three most-used words since January 20, 1993? "New Clinton policy."

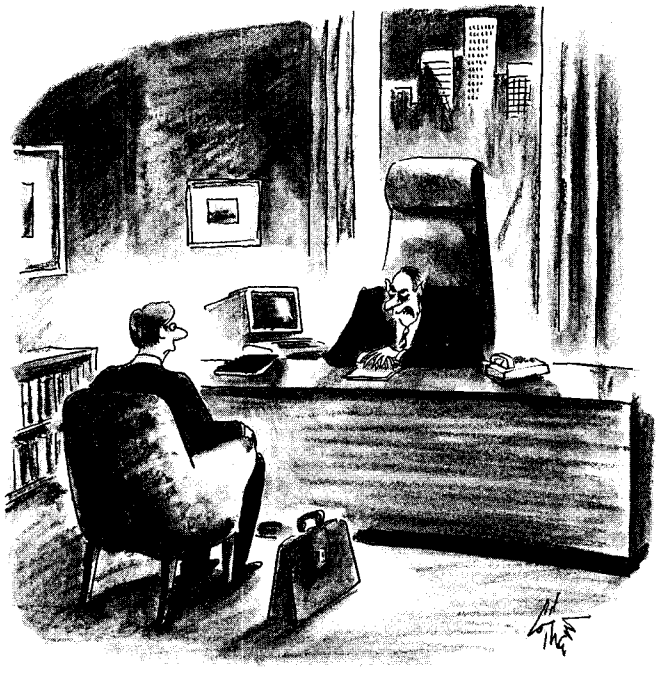
■ Wonder why the dollar started falling last week, despite the Fed's latest round of interest-rate hikes? Try House passage of the misbegotten crime bill, which to many domestic and international traders gave the appearance of new momentum for President Clinton's domestic agenda. That is, if the final crime bill passed, then prospects would improve for a health-care bill. This would mean at least $250 billion per year in new taxes, thereby sharply reducing future U.S. economic growth and the after-tax rate of return on foreign capital invested here. Financial markets always take the latest available information in order to discount future events. Watch for a dollar rally if the crime bill is defeated in the Senate.

■ The longer the Senate works this summer, the more harm it's likely to do. George Mitchell's hope is that if he strands senators in Washington, away from their constituents, they'll be forced to pass a sweeping overhaul of the health-care system out of sheer desperation. The voice of reason these days is Phil Gramm's: The nation's health-care system, he says, shouldn't be re-made in a month. The legislative process has become farcical, with Senator Mitchell making changes in his 1,400-page bill, then sprinkling a limited number of copies throughout the Senate with no indication of which passages were changed. Meanwhile, John Chafee has in essence resurrected the Finance Committee version of the Clinton bill (the subtle way to government-run health care) in the hopes of bailing out Democrats who were too stubborn to take this route a month ago. The case against the jury-rigged Chafee plan is easy enough to make: $120 billion in new taxes. Obstruction never looked so good. The Democrats' own polls show that complaining about "gridlock" works only when Democrats can argue that something voters desire is being blocked. In this case, of course, nothing is; only George Mitchell's last hurrah and an unpopular government intrusion into people's lives. Senator Gramm, march on.

■ Socialized medicine isn't working very well so far. Several senators got hernias trying to lift a copy of the Mitchell bill.

■ No single element of the health-care debate demonstrates the impulses of liberalism better than the question of federally mandated abortion coverage. Supporters of an abortion right have failed time and again to persuade Congress to enact federal funding for abortion. But the Clinton health plan and its variants would force all employers, regardless of moral qualms, to provide abortion coverage to any employee who might elect it. The power grab doesn't stop there. Because passage of Senator Kennedy's Employment Non-Discrimination Act appears unlikely this year, Senator Mitchell has hidden key provisions of it in his version of the health-care bill. Homosexuals would be allowed to sue employers who fire or refuse to hire them, because those employers would have denied them access to health care on the basis of sexual orientation. On top of that, the original Clinton package included ethnic quotas for medical-school admissions. Gay rights, abortion, ethnic quotas: buy government health care and get the rest free.

■ When President Clinton paraded the relatives of murdered children in front of the press as part of his successful attempt to revive the Omnibus Crime Bill, he was guilty of a logical nonsequitur as well as of tasteless political theater. If only Congress had acted sooner, he implied, these tragic deaths might have been averted. It's not clear which of the bill's provisions Mr. Clinton had in mind. Midnight basketball? The "assault weapon" ban? The federal death penalty for carjacking? But it's safe to say that nothing in this bill could have prevented the kidnapping and murder of Polly Klaas. Crime is, after all, primarily a local matter, handled by local police and courts. Yet in playing along with this charade—in agreeing that America needs a federal crime bill of some kind and then quibbling over the amount of social spending—Republicans have opened the door to all sorts of mischief. The mischief goes beyond the billions of dollars for mushy



"We work here till the oxygen's gone."

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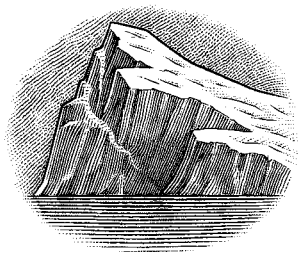

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■ Masthead watchers will have noticed several changes in *NR*'s editorial department in the past few months. Introductions are in order. Rich Lowry, who had been our articles editor, has gone down to Washington to keep an eye on Congress and the Clintons as our national political reporter. He has been replaced in New York by Jacob Sullum, formerly managing editor of *Reason*. Matthew Carolan has come on board as executive editor—the man who makes *NR*'s trains run on time—replacing Geoffrey Morris, who has moved on to *Reader's Digest* and whose book on Rush Limbaugh, *Rush to Us*, has just been published by Pinnacle. Karina Rollins, formerly of *The Public Interest*, has taken the new post of associate editor; and Ramesh Ponnuru, about to leave us for his senior year at Princeton, has been our summer editorial assistant. Belated welcomes all around.

programs aimed at addressing the "root causes" of crime (chiefly, it seems, a lack of recreational opportunities). It includes the ban on so-called assault weapons, which establishes the precedent that members of Congress may forbid the manufacture and sale of guns they don't like. It includes a measure championed by Representative Susan Molinari (R., N.Y.) that makes *accusations* of past sexual offenses admissible in court even when charges were never filed; this in effect means that the usual rules of justice don't apply to crimes that public opinion considers especially repugnant. Even the vaunted provision of money for more cops is questionable, and not just because its effect in any given city will be puny. Why should people in Butte, Montana, subsidize law enforcement in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles? You don't hear this kind of question much on Capitol Hill, even from the most vociferous critics of the crime bill; people might start wondering how much Congress can actually do to make their neighborhoods safer.

■ A friend of ours thought the crime bill was pretty tough when he noticed that the word "prison" appears several times. Then he realized he was reading the Democratic health-care bill.

The Endgame

With Mitchell hawking Clinton Lite
As Kerrey hoists what looks like Sprite,
And Chafee waving something that
Jay Rockefeller's spitting at,
While Hillary keeps losing mass
Like Alice through the looking glass,
Byrd rises to denounce the cost,
Which hits the Senate like Jack Frost.

W. H. VON DREELE

■ The Clinton Administration's drive to mug American savers and redistribute the proceeds to its client constituencies advanced another step with its recently announced settlement of a mortgage discrimination suit against Chevy Chase Federal Savings Bank in Maryland. Chevy Chase has agreed to open branches in minority communities, make $140 million in cut-rate loans available to minorities, place advertising in minority publications, etc. No actual instance of discrimination was produced in the suit, of course. There wasn't even the usual spurious talk about racially differing mortgage rejection rates. Instead, Chevy Chase was simply condemned for not having branches in black areas. Of course, nothing was preventing blacks from picking up the phone to obtain loans; in fact many did. And Chevy Chase had actually been denied permission to open in some of the areas. But facts do not matter in this crusade. They didn't matter last year either, when the Boston Federal Reserve study that claimed to prove the existence of mortgage discrimination was blown out of the water by the discovery that it had failed to address the fact that black and white default rates were equal, suggesting that the banks' rejection policies were economically rational. Nonetheless, the study's author, Alicia Munnell, is now in the Clinton Treasury. Lani Guinier lives: affirmative action is the new face of socialism. Chevy Chase, which denied wrongdoing but caved in to avoid legal costs, should be abandoned by all principled (and prudent) depositors.

■ With the exodus from Cuba accelerating, U.S. immigration officials are desperate to convince would-be defectors that America is a horrible place. Expect massive doses of daytime TV talk shows to be beamed into Cuba.

■ New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has promised to emphasize "quality of life" issues. For the typical resident or visitor, the lack of clean public restrooms has to rank high on the list of such concerns. And unlike graffiti, litter, or panhandling, it is a problem that could be addressed without spending taxpayers' money. In 1992 the French company JCDecaux offered to install and maintain automatic, self-cleaning, coin-operated toilets throughout the city in exchange for permission to rent advertising space on the exteriors of the cubicles. When advocates for the handicapped complained that the toilets were too small to accommodate wheelchairs, Decaux offered to install larger toilets alongside the standard units and give disabled people special magnetic cards to get in. But the critics said such a "separate but equal" arrangement would be demeaning; to avoid running afoul of the Americans with Disabilities Act, *all* the toilets would have to be big enough for wheelchairs. Wait a minute, said another set of concerned citizens. If you let anybody with a quarter use the larger units, prostitutes, drug dealers, and vagrants may start camping out in them. Two years later, the only automatic toilet in New York is behind City Hall.

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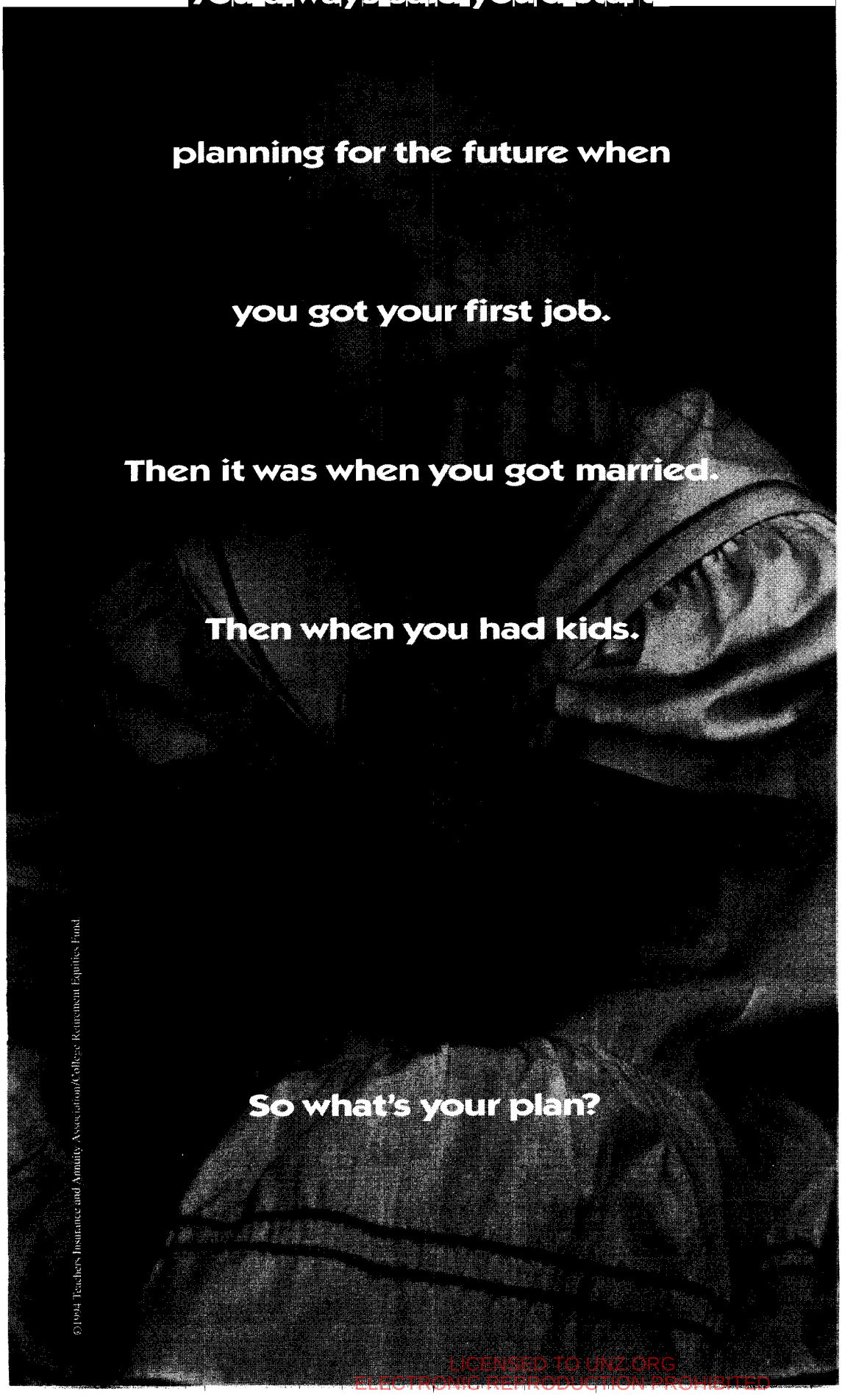
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planning for the future when
you got your first job.
Then it was when you got married.
Then when you had kids.
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(Press Release 8/31/93)

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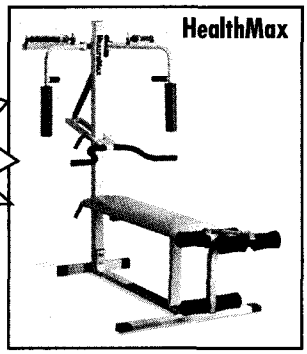

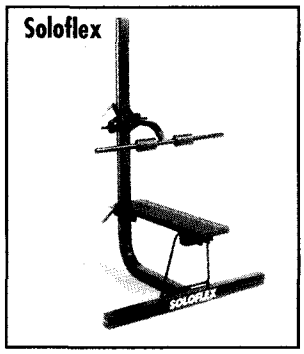

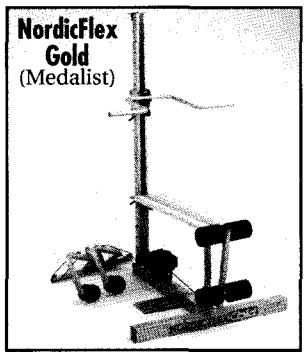

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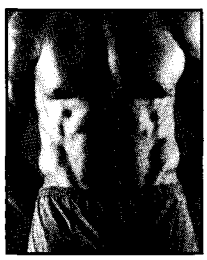
THE REASONS	HEALTHMAX	SOLOFLEX	NORDICFLEX GOLD
1 Low price	☑ YES **$329** (plus $49 S/H)	☒ NO **$995** (plus $105 S/H)	☒ NO **$999** (plus $99 S/H)
2 Easy to use	☑ YES No assembly/ disassembly required between exercises.	☒ NO Requires assembly/disassembly between exercises.	☒ NO Requires assembly/disassembly between exercises.
3 Leg Extension Unit included	☑ YES Permits both leg extensions and lying leg curls.	☒ NO Costs $200 extra.	☑ YES, **BUT...**Leg unit included doesn't permit lying leg curls.
4 Butterfly Unit included	☑ YES No extra cost.	☒ NO Costs $200 extra.	☑ YES, **BUT...**You must assemble before each use, and disassemble to use bench press.
5 Strength conditioning for all five major muscle groups	☑ YES **HEALTHMAX** strengthens all five: arms, legs, abdominals, back and pectorals.	☑ YES, **BUT...**You must purchase $400 in extra accessories to do comparable exercises for legs and pecs.	☑ YES, **BUT...**Why would you pay $700 more than **HEALTHMAX**?
6 Comfortable bench	☑ YES Padded bench is a full 47" long, 12" wide, and a comfortable 20" high.	☒ NO Padded bench is only 40½" long, making some lying down exercises awkward.	☒ NO Padded 40" bench is short, narrow (only 9" wide), and too high (24") off the ground.
7 Hydraulic cylinder resistance system	☑ YES Adjusts to your personal resistance level with a simple twist of a dial.	☒ NO Uses rubber bands which must be changed to vary resistance level.	☒ NO Uses complicated cord/pulley/mechanical resistance system.
8 Full refund of return freight if unit returned	☑ YES If not satisfied, we will refund your cost, shipping/handling charges, and all return freight!	☒ NO You pay over $85 to return. It must go by truck to Oregon!	☒ NO They keep your $99 shipping and handling payment.
9 Payable in installments	☑ YES 9 easy credit card installments of just $36.56! ($49.00 S/H added to first installment.)	☑ YES, **BUT...**You pay $39 per month for the next *2 YEARS!* (includes 10% interest)	☑ YES, **BUT...** You pay $200 plus $99 S/H up front and then $39 per month for 23 months! (includes 12% interest)



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■ Why did the chicken cross the road? To get a special break from Mike Espy.

■ The NAACP's board has ousted the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Chavis as executive director of the organization. The proximate cause of his dismissal was two women's allegations of sexual harassment and wrongful termination, and Dr. Chavis's failure to inform the board of the charges or of his promise to pay one accuser up to $332,400 from the NAACP's coffers. Board members were already uneasy about the NAACP's debts, its substantial decline in membership (more than 25,000 people have left since last June), and Dr. Chavis's overtures to street gangs and Louis Farrakhan. Now Dr. Chavis has filed a lawsuit against the NAACP, calling his dismissal a "crucifixion" and promising a "resurrection." In the short term, the post-Chavis NAACP will need to get its house in order financially. But it needs to clean house morally as well. Its insistence that politicians could legislate black success has done much to produce a climate in which blacks' problems are routinely attributed to conspiracies—a climate that Dr. Chavis's recent rhetoric is designed to exploit. Reformers can start with forthright condemnations of racists like Louis Farrakhan and of the criminal gangs that oppress law-abiding Americans of all races, but especially minorities.

■ A month ago, *NR* noted that the Clinton Administration's policies threatened to sunder the Atlantic Alliance, even to generate an anti-American Europe a few years down the road. In a recent *New York Post* column Henry Kissinger seconds this geopolitical analysis. He makes the point that while Central European nations want to join NATO in order to defend themselves against Russia, Russia wants to join in order to "drain NATO of content." Mr. Clinton's "Partnership for Peace" would have NATO include both Russia and Central Europe. It would thereby transform NATO from a sturdy alliance to deter external threats into a rickety collective-security arrangement to keep the peace among its own members. The melancholy result, writes Dr. Kissinger, is that in Europe those whose security is guaranteed "are not threatened, and those that are threatened are not guaranteed." Dr. Kissinger's arguments also underscore the strategic case for a North Atlantic Free Trade Area as a way to bind America and Europe more closely together. Clinton being Clinton, however, realism doesn't have a chance until the leading Republicans overcome their current skittishness on foreign policy.

■ WATCH THIS SPACE: Last year, *NR* warned that Canada's federal election might prove more interesting than anyone here expected, and it did; the Bush-clone Progressive Conservative Party was annihilated, apparently for good. This year, we say the same thing about the election due September 12 in the French-speaking province of Quebec. Despite much wishful thinking by media liberals in English-speaking Canada, credulously echoed by their American counterparts, the separatist Parti Québecois appears to be holding a 3- to 4-percentage-point lead over the governing Quebec Liberal Party. That could mean a shockingly large PQ majority of National Assembly seats, because the Liberals' support is piled up wastefully in a few districts. The PQ promises, if elected, to hold a referendum on independence. The wishful thinking, which opinion polls currently seem to support, is that French-speaking voters may not elect the PQ and will certainly flinch from this final step. Maybe. But don't bet on it. In historical perspective, the period since the PQ first won an election in 1976 looks very much like the thirty years of ebb and flow between the Irish Nationalist Party's first success in persuading a British government to propose a Home Rule Bill, in 1886, and its final triumph when the British Parliament passed Home Rule in 1914. In foreign-policy terms, an independent Quebec is no threat to U.S. interests. but in domestic policy, our own growing linguistic and ethnic divisions—a/k/a "diversity"—will inexorably become so.

■ Carlos the Jackal unexpectedly became available for a post in the Clinton Administration.

■ What would you expect to happen if the advisory council of the National Endowment for the Arts revoked grants to some "provocative" "artists"? You'd expect bloody hell. Screams of censorship, a Fourth Reich on the Potomac. Or rather, that's what you'd expect if the panel made its decision at the behest of conservative politicians or evangelical Christians. When the panel doing the revoking happens to be made up of Democratic appointees, you expect—what? Total silence. That's all there is to be heard in the wake of the August 5 decision by Jane Alexander's NEA to revoke grants to three photographers—including Andres *Piss Christ* Serrano, whose latest work features images of mouldering corpses. As yet we haven't heard a peep from the "activists." The *New York Times* hasn't devoted so much as a word to the story. Not that we're complaining. But the definition of censorship does need to be updated. In the Eighties, the word referred to what happens when a lousy artist is denied a portion of tax dollars. Now it refers to what hap-

His Fading Clout

When Pooh-Bah flipped a fan, the Japs
Would flip in unison lest Taps
Sound over those who'd disagreed,
Just after they'd been snickersnee'd;
But Mr. Clinton, one infers,
Views Lord High Executioners
As too barbaric for today,
So, *ipso facto,* few obey.

W. H. VON DREELE

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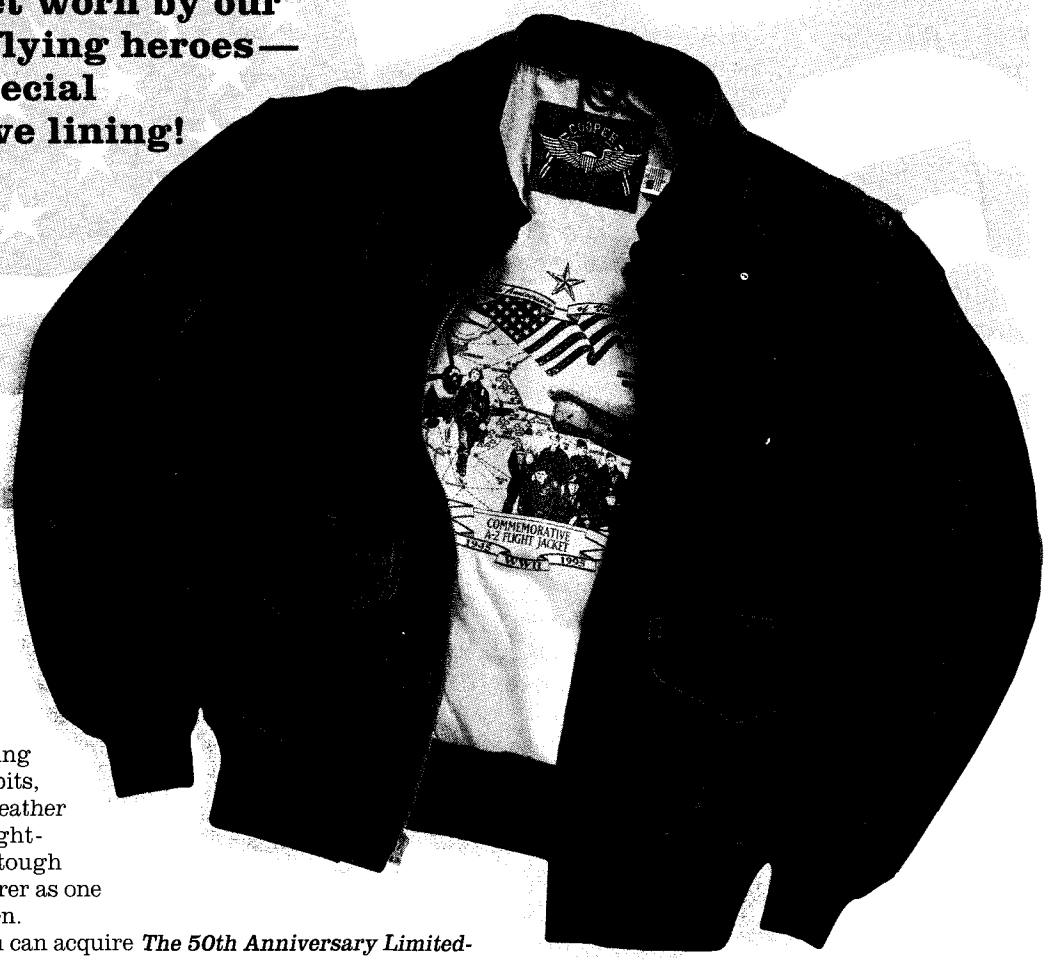

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pens when a lousy artist is denied a portion of tax dollars *by a Republican*.

■ Overheard at Treasury: "Mr. Derrida, Mr. Steiner will see you now."

■ Hide the women and children; the Episcopal General Convention is in session—with what consequences for Christianity only time will reveal. The country's most liberal "mainline" denomination faces internal pressures to ordain active homosexuals, bless "same-sex unions," and suppress nay-sayers on the ordination of women. At the same time, there are important countervailing pressures. A waffling pastoral statement on sexuality inspired many conservative bishops—90 or so by the time the 10-day convention opened in Indianapolis—to put forth a resonant statement affirming traditional sexual mores. No less consequential are resolutions with heavy grassroots support calling on the Church to decentralize, de-bureaucratize, and generally quit making it hard to practice the faith at the local level. The Episcopal Church, top-heavy with well-educated, financially successful members, has over the years exercised an influence disproportionate to its size (2.4 million—down from 3.5 million in the late Sixties). The slightest traditionalist wiggle by such a church is sure to have consequences felt in other liberal denominations. Could God have something up His capacious sleeve?

■ A few days before the first procedural vote on the crime bill, White House lobbyist Susan Brophy popped into Congressman Peter Torkildsen's office to urge the Republican moderate from Massachusetts to vote aye. If he did, promised Miss Brophy, she would get *Boston Globe* columnist Tom Oliphant to give him some favorable ink. Mr. Torkildsen resisted her entreaties and voted against the rule. The next week Mr. Oliphant happened to write a column titled "[Peter] Blute's courage [Blute voted for the bill], Torkildsen's cave-in on crime." Mr. Oliphant assures us it's merely coincidence; more likely, Miss Brophy was counting on predictability.

■ Correction: In "Figuring Out Feminism (Cont'd)" (Aug. 29), an ellipsis should have appeared between the eighth and ninth paragraphs of the letter from Jeff Cohen of Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting.

■ Are the people advising President Clinton the same ones who designed the baggage-handling system at the new Denver Airport?

Lawton Chiles, Saved

He almost was a goner
When Castro waved farewell,
While rafters by the hundreds
Set out upon the swell,
But Dee Dee did retractions
And Reno changed her tune
As one more Clinton flip-flop
Saved Lawton from a swoon.

W. H. VON DREELE

It Oughta Be a Crime

THE RESURRECTION of the Comeback Kid's crime bill hangs in doubt as we go to press, with Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole clutching a letter signed by 40 other Republican senators threatening to block it by procedural means if it is not improved by amendment. But if it were improved from their point of view, it would probably become unacceptable to liberal Democrats in the House. In short, Senate Republicans are close to putting a stranglehold on a bill that a month ago everyone was certain would pass, if only because no one wants to vote against a "crime" bill.

What happened? In those few weeks the debate on the bill shifted dramatically to the right. Whether the GOP can express—and capitalize on—the newly aggressive public mood on crime depends on whether Senate Republicans can avoid the mistakes of their counterparts in the House, who dealt Mr. Clinton a stunning blow, then saw dozens of their own members help him back to his feet.

Mr. Clinton's defeat on the procedural vote on August 11 marked him as a President with the legislative clout of Jimmy Carter on one of his bad days. Things got worse when he spent a weekend denouncing Republicans for failing to do God's will, and still couldn't win the 8 additional Democratic votes he needed. So, finally, he invited to the White House the 11 Republicans who had betrayed their party by voting for the rule. They in turn insisted that Newt Gingrich come along. That was the great bipartisan breakthrough.

Now, Mr. Gingrich was not dealt a strong hand on the crime bill; at some point, no matter what, Republican moderates were going to peel away from the party. But his giddiness at seeing a punch-drunk Clinton reaching out to the GOP for support undercut the Republican position unnecessarily. In politics, the point of someone's being down is that he affords a better target for kicking. When he was praising Mr. Clinton's sincerity, Mr. Gingrich should have been demanding that *all* the $9-billion worth of goo-goo social-welfare programs be ditched. Instead, he encouraged the negotiations between GOP moderates and the President that produced a bill similar in substance to the original, only this time with the label "bipartisan."

The $3.3 billion ostentatiously cut from the crime bill was shadow money that wasn't authorized in the first place. The bill still retains about $7 billion in spending on social programs like the "community-based justice grants

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designed to" require prosecutors to "focus on the offender, not simply the specific offense, and impose individualized sanctions [such as] conflict resolution, treatment, counseling, and recreation programs." Prison funding was actually *reduced* by $800 million in the moderates' deal, and there's still no guarantee that any of the prison dollars will actually go to building new space (although state recipients of the prison money are still required to implement "comprehensive correctional plan[s]" that must include "drug diversion programs," "community corrections programs," "job skills programs," and so on). The *New York Times* headline—"House approves crime bill after days of bargaining, giving victory to Clinton"—says the rest.

This brilliant deal was brought to you by the Clinton Republicans, including rising GOP star John Kasich, who

Right Data

The Worst Idea

ON ANY GIVEN day 37 million Americans are without health insurance. They are generally young, with 64 per cent between the ages of 18 and 39. Because they tend to be healthy, many simply choose not to buy health insurance. Only a small minority—2 million, or 0.7 per cent of the population—cannot purchase insurance because of some medical condition.

Twenty-eight states have already solved the latter problem. They have established risk pools to sell insurance to those who cannot buy private policies. Although premiums are usually 25 to 50 per cent above the statewide average, they're a bargain for people with pre-existing conditions, the vast majority of whom can now purchase health insurance at competitive free-market rates.

Unfortunately, the Clinton/Mitchell bill's approach is quite different. Under the so-called "community rating" formula every person in a health alliance will pay the same premium regardless of age, sex, or medical condition. New York State implemented the same one-price-fits-all regime last year, with dismaying results.

WAVE OF THE FUTURE?
Insurance Premiums in New York

	25-Year-Old Male	55-Year-Old Male
1992	$773.40	$1,701.50
1993	1,288.00	1,288.00
1994	1,741.20	1,741.20
Increase, 1992–94	125.1%	2.3%

Source: National Center for Policy Analysis

In the first year of community rating 25-year-old males were hit with premium hikes of over $500, while 55-year-olds paid about $415 less than under the risk-rated system. Not surprisingly many young people decided to drop their coverage. With fewer young, healthy policyholders available to subsidize older ones, insurance premiums skyrocketed again this year. The upshot: Even older policyholders—who, in theory, should pay less under community rating—are paying slightly more.

Community rating together with universal coverage ensures a more regressive distribution of income. The median income of workers aged 25 or under, for example, is only $18,313, compared to $43,751 for those aged 45 to 54. Yet the Mitchell bill would force young people to pay $650 per year more than the real cost of their insurance and subsidize older people by about $2,000. The bottom line is a net transfer of $59 billion from people in their twenties and thirties to those 55 to 64.

Having created the problem, the House bill "solves" it by making federal subsidies available to families with incomes of up to 240 per cent of the poverty line—$38,400 for a family of four. This will be the largest federal entitlement ever, available to more than 80 million Americans, of whom 50 million *already have health insurance.*

Many will want to avoid such dependency. In rising above the subsidy level, however, they will incur enormous tax disincentives. Martin Feldstein, studying an earlier version of the House bill, concluded that a woman with one child who made $15,000 a year would lose 19 cents of federal subsidy for each additional dollar of earnings. When this loss is added to the income and payroll taxes she would now face, her total marginal tax rate balloons to 65 per cent—a good reason not to work harder.

Bad enough. But income is not the only factor used to determine subsidy payments in Mitchell's bill. Individuals and families would have to report pregnancies, the termination of pregnancies, children reaching their 19th birthday, and other personal information to their state government, which would recalculate subsidy payments every month. Employers would have to notify the government whenever an employee receives a raise or is fired. Personal privacy and financial independence are both victims of the Mitchell bill.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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was called into last-minute negotiations by GOP moderates Mike Castle and Susan Molinari to provide budget expertise. The House Republicans' top number cruncher, Mr. Kasich presumably understands that the new $30.2-billion package is still underfunded by roughtly $10 billion. Funding for the crime bill is supposed to come from Al Gore's reinventing government, but no savings estimate for it has exceeded $20 billion. This shortfall could require a tax increase unless offsetting discretionary savings are found elsewhere—a doubtful proposition for election-year appropriators.

Mr. Kasich was drawn into this self-deception by the "new spirit of bipartisanship," a Washington phrase that means process triumphs over principles. Senior House Republicans are now suggesting Mr. Kasich should be replaced as leader of the GOP budget caucus. Sadly, we have to agree. Another crime-bill loser is Michael Huffington, looking to unseat Dianne Feinstein in this year's California Senate race. Just as he was getting the trust of conservative Republicans and Democrats, Mr. Huffington voted for a budget-busting bill with all manner of fuzzy-headed programs. Susan Molinari hurt herself too, imperiling her bid to become vice chairman of the Republican House Conference.

The larger problem in the crime debate has been that Republicans were to some extent compromised from the beginning. Their own proposals had their share of nonsense, allowing George Mitchell to go on *Meet the Press* and after a lengthy recital—"supervised sports programs, tutorial and monitoring programs, sporting and recreational equipment, nutrition guidance," etc.—ask: "How is it that these things are good when the Republicans propose them but special-interest pork when the Democrats propose them?" If, from the start, Republicans had embraced the NRA's alternative crime bill—which had money for cops and prisons, tougher sentencing provisions, and nothing else—they would have been in a much stronger position to exploit the shift in public opinion at the end.

Republicans have to understand—and perhaps a dawning awareness of this will animate their ranks in the Senate—that their principles now match the public mood in a newly powerful way. On health care, the debate has moved ever closer to Phil Gramm. On crime it moved far enough to the right in just a few days to imperil a pork-as-usual Washington bill. The same momentum will soon be driving the welfare debate. Smart Democrats realize it: A June 28 memo from White House pollster Stan Greenberg urges Democratic incumbents to talk about "three strikes and you're out," spending cuts, tax relief, and welfare reform. There are no liberal issues that are winning issues.

The Democrats' survival as the majority party depends on a skillful aping of conservative positions, and on Republicans' letting them get away with it. On crime, they may yet slip by; how well they do on issues like welfare reform may determine the shape of the next Congress and the fate of the Clinton Presidency. Republicans may not like it, but sticking to Republican principles is now the politically expedient thing to do.

Institutionalized Racism

IN THE 1978 *Bakke* case, the deciding opinion held, in Justice Powell's typically Delphic fashion, that discrimination against whites is every bit as illegal and unconstitutional as discrimination against blacks, except that just a little of it would be okay. A state medical school could not, therefore, simply set aside a number of seats for blacks and other racial minorities, but it could count an applicant's minority race as a "plus factor" in granting admission. The result was to initiate a fraud which has since been practiced by probably all leading institutions of higher education in the country, and certainly by the University of Texas School of Law.

For over 25 years, the UT Law School has practiced "affirmative action" in admissions in order to obtain an entering class that would be about 5 per cent black and 10 per cent Mexican-American. The school is highly selective: in 1992, the whites it admitted had a median LSAT in the 93rd percentile and a median college GPA above 3.5. If these admissions standards had been applied nonracially, the entering class would have had very few blacks—probably less than 1 per cent—or Mexican-Americans. The school, therefore, simply established a separate and lower set of admissions standards, according to which self-declared black and Mexican-American applicants are in effect automatically admitted with scores at which a white applicant would be automatically denied admission. In addition, the school recruits blacks nationwide, and grants them and Mexican-Americans scholarships that more needy and better qualified whites are denied.

On a lawsuit filed by four rejected applicants who would have been automatically admitted had they not been white, a federal district judge has now held that the school's admissions practices did indeed violate the plaintiffs' constitutional rights. He refused to order their admission, however, because they did not meet what he conceded was an "impossible" requirement of showing that they personally would have been admitted had it not been for the unconstitutional racial discrimination. After all, they are merely four out of thousands of whites with good scores who were denied admission.

The judge also refused to award the plaintiffs more than $1 each in damages because he found that the school had violated their constitutional rights in good faith; the law professors, including some nationally known constitutional authorities, apparently just didn't understand the law. Racially preferential admissions were fully justified, in his view (contrary to *Bakke*), simply because the "meager representation" of blacks and Mexican-Americans that would otherwise result "would be woefully inadequate in a state university supported in

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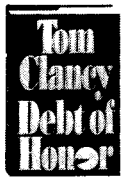

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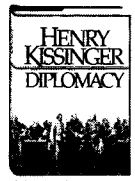

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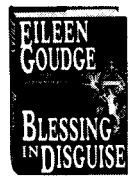

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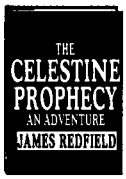

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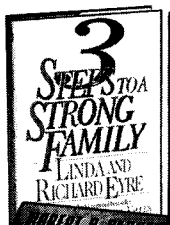

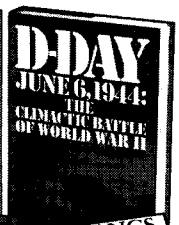

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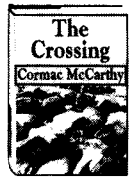

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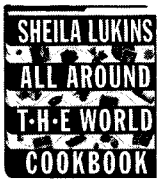

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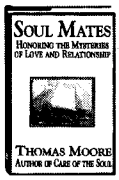

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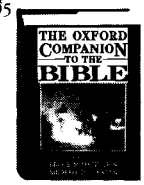

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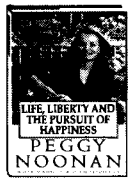

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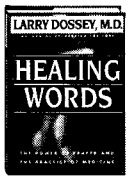

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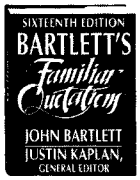

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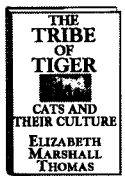

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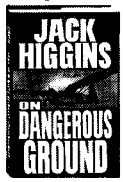

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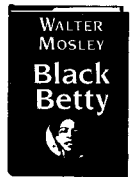

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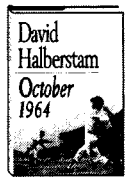

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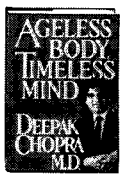

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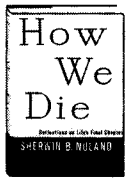

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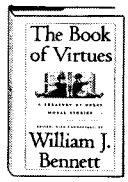

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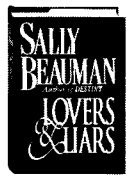

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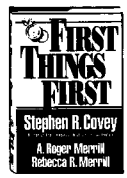

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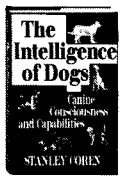

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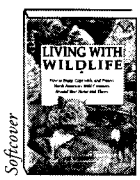

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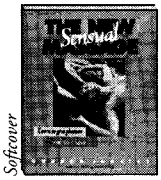

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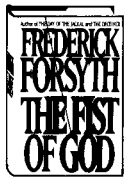

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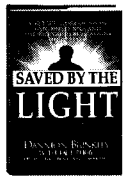

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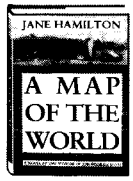

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part by revenues from *all* state residents." He did not explain why white residents should pay taxes for an institution that explicitly disfavors whites.

Perpetuating the *Bakke* fraud, the judge found that the law school had cured its constitutional violation after the lawsuit was filed by discontinuing the use of a special minority-admissions subcommittee and having all applicants considered by a single committee. The change, supposedly putting blacks and Mexican-Americans into competition with whites, will not in fact make the slightest difference. The academic achievement gap between whites and members of preferred races is much too large to be bridged by a racial "plus factor." At Berkeley, for example, the median combined SAT score for admitted blacks is more than 200 points—representing several years' difference in academic preparation—lower than the median for whites. In the 1992 UT Law School entering class, the median LSAT for blacks—after recruitment efforts and financial inducements—was 15 percentile points lower than the white median, and the Mexican-American median was 18 points lower. The only way the school can achieve its 5 per cent and 10 per cent "goals," explicitly approved by the judge, is by continuing to do what it did before the suit: simply taking the best black applicants and the best Mexican-American applicants until the desired numbers are reached.

The law school and the university have correctly greeted the decision as a near total victory, a vindication of the law school's vigorous "affirmative action" efforts. Unless reversed on appeal, its effect will be to guarantee that racial preferences, introduced as a "temporary" measure a quarter-century ago, will never end.

Endgame in Cuba

THE REAL news out of Cuba is not the flood of refugees, but the terminal crisis of the Castro regime, which has clearly entered a new phase. The endgame has been more protracted than many expected a few years ago, but the outcome is not in doubt—only the timing. Havana a few weeks back was the scene of unprecedented demonstrations against the regime, when many thousands tried in desperation to catch a boat out. When its subjects are no longer afraid to defy the authorities, a totalitarian system has come to the end of the line.

Yet there were strong currents in the Clinton Administration against taking advantage of this crisis. The Administration's first candidate for Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America was an advocate of *easing* pressures on Cuba; so is the NSC staffer who deals with these matters.

As Cubans headed for the boats en masse, the U.S. Government was confronted with a cruel dilemma. To admit asylum-seekers without limit, as we have done for decades, would have been more humane to them as individuals. But U.S. immigration policy cannot be determined by a foreign despot. And an open door would have tempted Castro to try another Mariel—a full-fledged, regime-sponsored exodus such as the one in 1980, when Castro emptied out his prisons, mental hospitals, and drug-treatment centers, and shipped the inmates to the United States. He thus managed to use emigration both as a safety valve to relieve his people's discontents, and as a weapon against us, compounding social problems here.

The cry of pain from the Cuban-American community after the asylum window was closed had the good effect of forcing the Administration into a series of stronger measures against the regime. In this case, the President's tendency to treat foreign-policy questions as aspects of domestic politics (Florida has 25 electoral votes) has led him in the right direction. The first move was to prohibit dollar remittances to the island. This was a powerful blow to an economy that has been totally dependent on the U.S. dollar ever since Soviet subsidies went and the peso evaporated; it could cost the regime up to $500 million a year. Charter flights to and from the island were curtailed. U.S. military aircraft were ordered to augment Radio Martí by beaming radio and television signals to Cuba.

This is not the moment to stop. The best way to help the suffering people of Cuba is to do all we can to accelerate the regime's final collapse. A full-scale U.S. naval blockade would have that effect. Should that seem likely to take too long, we should not shrink from assisting anti-Castro freedom-fighters—and this time getting it right.

It is also time to begin planning for the post-Castro era. In this area, the U.S. can help by encouraging free elections not dominated by any exile groups, no matter how well intentioned; by lowering our trade barriers; and by pouring investment into the country as fast as possible to resuscitate the economy—*after* Cuba has been liberated.

Linus Pauling, R I P

IF LINUS PAULING had confined himself to the study of chemistry, his death probably would have escaped the notice of this journal. But it affronts the memory to read such a headline as in the *New York Times*, page one: "Linus Pauling Dead at 93/Chemist and Voice for Peace." To dispose quickly of the second point: If Linus Pauling's recommendations had been followed, it is reasonable to conjecture that a) there would have been much less peace than in fact there was during the Cold War; and b) the Soviet Union might well have triumphed.

Oh yes, we speak at NATIONAL REVIEW with something of a personal memory. Some thirty years ago James Burnham wrote an editorial, "The Collaborators." It was Dr. Pauling's practice in those days to threaten a lawsuit against anyone who called attention to his obsessed finding that in all questions in which the Soviet Union and the United States were at odds, the Soviet Union was

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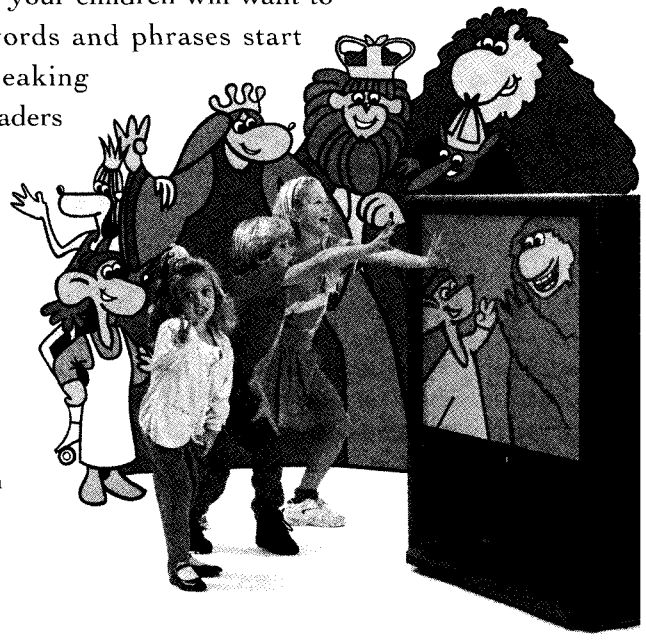

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manifestly in the right. A few weeks after our editorial, we wrote a second entitled, "Are You Being Sued by Linus Pauling?"

The lawsuit proved of some historic legal interest in that *NR*'s attorney, Mr. C. Dickerman Williams, persuaded the court that *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, which granted immunity to public comment about a public "official" absent "actual malice," granted it also in the case of a public figure. After a fortnight during which Dr. Pauling spent many hours instructing the jury on how distinguished he was, the court threw his complaint out. And we wrote in these pages that if it was incorrect to label Linus Pauling a "collaborator" then the term was no longer useful.

During the missile crisis, Linus Pauling, Friend of Peace, labeled President Kennedy's embargo against Castro's Cuba a warlike deed, its author "worse than Hitler." By the moral standard of this prince of peace, John F. Kennedy was worse than Hitler for acting decisively to frustrate Soviet nuclear designs in Cuba. A year or so later the Nobel Committee gave him another prize, citing his contributions to peace. A stirring editorial in *Life* magazine raised the question whether the Nobel Committee shouldn't just go away, or consume more vitamin C, before decorating a flagrant fellow traveler.

Some time before he died, Dr. Pauling announced cures for the common cold and for cancer. These cures, according to settled medical opinion, proved as efficacious as his proposals for peace, which amounted to getting out of the way of the Soviet Union.

Notes & Asides

■ Dear Bill:

Your RIP on John P. Roche [June 16] speaks of his laudable conversion from his social-democratic origins to a conservative stance. Permit me to add further evidence of John's gingerly pilgrimage, from my association with him.

In 1967, commenting on the leftist pronouncements of the World Council of Churches, John suggested that "anti-Americanism had become a substitute for the Nicene Creed as the focus of Christian unity."

That same year, as a White House speechwriter, he showed LBJ my piece in *The Catholic World* on how to think about Vietnam. In response, Johnson said, "I have often had the feeling when reading the criticism of our policy that the critics live in a different world than I do—a world in which third options appear miraculously when existing choices are tough." (LBJ's later request that I draft the foreign-policy platform planks at the turbulent 1968 convention in Chicago was, I believe, a direct result of the article and of John's endorsement of me.)

And in 1972, commenting on my article distinguishing between "rational idealists" (secular and religious liberals and utopians) and "historical realists" (Russell Kirk and Reinhold Niebuhr), John wrote: "Your article was extremely interesting. Query: Am I a historical realist?"

I replied: "I think you are, but with some vestigial manifestations of an earlier rationalism!"

In subsequent encounters, we congratulated each other for having tossed aside our youthful utopian dreams and becoming morally concerned realists, i.e., conservatives.

Sincerely,
Ernie
[Ernest W. Lefever]
Chevy Chase, Md.

■ Dear Bill:

My brother John collaborated with the late Morrie Ryskind in writing Mr. Ryskind's autobiography, titled *I Shot an Elephant in My Pajamas.* (Morrie Ryskind and George Kaufman were the two principal writers for the Marx Brothers movies, and the title comes from the screenplay of *Animal Crackers.*)

I hesitate to toot the family horn, but I am certain that anyone interested in the Golden Years of Broadway and Hollywood will find this book a delight to read. NATIONAL REVIEW readers will also be interested in Morrie's account of his efforts in helping you launch *NR* in the early 1950s. His humorous and affectionate description of his first meeting with you is worth the price of the book.

The price, by the way, is $11.95. The book can be purchased in major bookstores or ordered directly from The American Studies Center, 1030 15th Street N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005. (Add $1.00 for postage and handling.)

All the best,
James C. Roberts, President
The American Studies Center
Washington, D.C.

Dear Jim: Without Morrie Ryskind, NATIONAL REVIEW would never have published its first issue. He was, on top of being a friend of the Right, a superb comic writer, a wonderful friend, and a marvelous essayist on whom we often depended. I hope many will tune in on the book. Cordially, **—WFB**

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ON THE SCENE

The Lost Crusade?

RICH LOWRY

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FOR WEEKS, Senator Paul Coverdell (R., Ga.) had been holding strategy meetings with 50 or 60 representatives of conservative organizations opposed to Clinton-style health reform. But on Friday, August 12, there was a sense of breakthrough.

Two days before, Senator Bob Packwood (R., Ore.) had talked on the phone with 15 executives from the Business Roundtable—representing some of America's biggest corporations and those most tempted to go along with a large-scale overhaul of health care—urging them to oppose the Mitchell bill and inviting them to the Friday meeting. Packwood wasn't sure he had persuaded them, but soon big-business representatives were booking spots at the meeting. About 100 extra chairs were hauled into the Dirksen committee room, and by 10 A.M. Friday the room was packed with about 250 people, dozens of them standing around its edges.

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

Coverdell introduced Packwood, the Republican point man on health care, who has dubbed the Mitchell plan "Lethal Weapon." There was polite applause, then more-than-polite applause that grew into a standing ovation. Packwood in turn introduced Democratic Senator Richard Shelby (Ala.), who has threatened a filibuster to stop Mitchell. Again, the audience stood and cheered. "I've never seen this type of unity, this type of enthusiasm and strength of purpose," says one Senate staffer, "especially not in the business community."

It was a snapshot of the Clinton Administration's failure on health care: mainstream business lobbyists rubbing shoulders with representatives of free-market organizations like Citizens for a Sound Economy, and all of them cheering a disaffected Democrat and a Republican moderate who just two months ago was considered likely to cut a bipartisan deal. Instead of assembling a delicate coalition for its version of reform, the Clinton Administration has created a diverse and powerful opposition to it. "I don't know if the Republicans have had this kind of coalition on an issue ever," says Marshall Wittmann, the Christian Coalition's director of legislative affairs.

The key to it all has been the Democratic unwillingness to move to the center. Not only has this intransigence endangered the chances of a health-care bill passing this year, it has made health care almost a win–win issue for Republicans.

It has been clear for months that the only way for the Democratic leadership to pass a Clinton-like bill would be to make a feint toward the center. A few steps rightward, and the Democrats would immediately meet Republican Senator John Chafee (R.I.), the architect of the bipartisan, government-intensive Finance Committee bill, and his "mainstream" coalition, a handful of lawmakers from both parties who can't wait to deal. But until recently the Democrats showed no signs of budging. The Mitchell plan brazenly went beyond the Finance Committee bill, and yet Hillary Clinton—directly contradicting her husband—suggested that even it didn't go far enough.

The result has been to isolate the center and to lose it as a potential Clinton ally—Big business is an example. If it isn't naturally inclined to Ira Magaziner–style social engineering, neither is it ideologically conservative. At first big business wanted reform because it promised to reduce cost shifting and (in the Clinton plan at least) offered subsidies for insuring early retirees. But when it became clear that Democratic reform would mean burdens like premium taxes and restrictions on the ability of firms to self-insure—and that the Democrats had no intention of dropping those provisions—big business backed away.

So instead of a lukewarm ally, the Democrats made corporate America an outright enemy. And they've toughened many Republican moderates. A chart-wielding Senator Arlen Specter (Pa.) has been savage in his criticisms of Mitchell and even let the f-word ("filibuster") pass his lips. Leading the effort to kill Democratic reform is Packwood, who supported Nixon's health-care package 20 years ago and is favorably disposed, in theory at least, to the employer mandate.

Republican moderates are more isolated than before. "What I don't want are three Republicans—Senators Danforth, Durenberger, and Chafee—trying to direct the rest of us, 40 of us, where we should go," Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole (R., Kan.), typically the intra-party conciliator, said recently on *Meet the Press*. Dole had been steaming for weeks, ever since Durenberger circulated a letter among downtown lobbyists attacking both his bill and his legislative strategy.

Senate Republicans have taken advantage of their relative unity to launch a well-organized, nearly fatal assault on the Mitchell bill. Packwood sets strategy at a daily meeting with a small group of senatorial lieutenants. Coverdell (a budding Senate star, to judge from his performance on health care) is charged with coordinating tac-

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tics with grass-roots groups. Judd Gregg (R., N.H.) manages the debate on the floor. He has divided GOP senators into various working groups to dissect the Mitchell plan; they have catalogued 18 new taxes, 50 new bureaucracies, 177 new mandates on the states, 815 new duties for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, etc.

The Republican strategy has been to repeat this litany long enough for the Mitchell bill to collapse of its own weight—hence the slow-down in the Senate debate. It has worked. The only way out will be for Democrats to jettison Clinton–Mitchell in favor of a Clinton–Mitchell–Chafee bill.

Chafee's "mainstream" group has produced a plan similar to the Finance Committee's, a halfway house for government-run health care. The plan includes a national board that would design two standard health-benefits packages, federal subsidies for people with incomes up to 200 per cent of the poverty level, and about $120 billion in new taxes over ten years. Ted Kennedy (D., Mass.) has called the plan an "encouraging sign." But the "mainstream" bill has liabilities for both Left and Right: it would probably cover no more than 92 per cent of Americans, offending universal-care zealots like Paul Wellstone (D., Minn.), but it relies on new taxes to do so, keeping most Republicans away. And time may be running short for the Senate—a third of its members anxious to be home campaigning—to sign on to what Dole calls Health Care Bill "Entry Number Eight."

While Senate Democrats struggle toward a deal they should have cut weeks ago, the neglected center is taking off without them in the House. The bill authored by Roy Rowland (D., Ga.) and Michael Bilirakis (R., Fla.), a consensus plan that the *Washington Post* wouldn't even deign to mention until recently, is now a serious rival to the Gephardt plan. The problem is that the bill, after a revamping by a bipartisan group of 10 congressmen, has shifted closer to Tennessee Democrat Jim Cooper's now-abandoned managed competition plan and is taking hits from the Right. Pro-lifers have major problems with its abortion language. And conservatives balk at its standard benefits package, temporary elimination of the insurance deduction for the unemployed (in effect, a tax increase), and large-scale insurance subsidies.

Most Republicans look at this landscape and privately hope nothing passes this year. For some, supporting Rowland–Bilirakis is a way to ensure that outcome. They're betting that, for all its flaws from a conservative viewpoint, the bill would pose an insoluble dilemma for Democrats: they can either reject Rowland–Bilirakis and go to the voters empty-handed, or accept it, enraging their left flank. They lose either way. But what if a Mitchell-like bill somehow squeezes through—say, after a trumped-up compromise with Chafee or after a Rowland–Bilirakis bill is bastardized in a House–Senate conference?

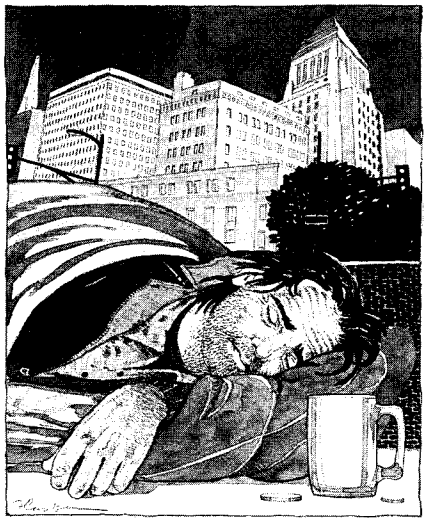
The irony—and the insanity of the liberal strategy on health care—is that the Democrats would almost certainly still lose. For one thing, voters just don't care that much about health care; it's well down on the list of their concerns, behind crime, taxes, and education. A June 28 memo on how to fight the fall elections from White House pollster Stan Greenberg hardly mentions health-care reform. So there's not much potential gain from passing a big bill. But there's plenty of potential cost. Just one part of the Mitchell plan, its strict community rating, could double or triple the cost of insurance premiums for the young and healthy. "If the Mitchell plan were to pass," says Shelby, "it would be a negative once it was implemented."

Why have Democrats gone this route? "Health care is their Holy Grail," says the Senate Republican Policy Committee's Eric Ueland. "They've created a theology around health care which insists that St. Bill and St. Hillary will deliver to the middle class an entitlement from which the middle class will never be able to unwrap itself. And as a consequence, Democrats will be the governing majority in this country for generations to come."

Or, if they adhere rigidly enough to the faith, at least until November 8.□

Taking Back the Streets

ROBERT L. GASKIN



Fred Carlson

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO'S septuagenarian columnist Herb Caen has likened it to a sixteenth-century English law that required public flogging of vagrants; the ACLU has condemned it as a violation of the basic constitutional rights to freedom of travel and association; members of the clergy have denounced it as a cold and uncaring attempt to sweep a desperate problem away. Yet ordinary citizens seem to like it. Last August Mayor Frank Jordan instituted the Matrix Program, a sort of tough-love approach to the growing problems caused by the homeless in San Francisco. The professionally indignant have been nipping at his heels ever since.

Walking down Market Street or up Powell Street, tourists and local citizens used to run a gauntlet of panhandlers, drunkards, drug addicts, and the mentally ill, who would line the sidewalks requesting (or demanding) money. Petty and serious street crimes were becoming commonplace in areas that were supposed to attract tourists. Union Square, surrounded by upscale stores in the heart of downtown, was increasingly avoided by anyone who didn't want to run the risk of being panhandled into penury. Every downtown park was becoming the property of the indigent as they set up tents and makeshift shelters.

Mr. Gaskin is a writer in San Francisco.

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Amid growing complaints by city businesses, tourist groups, and members of the general public, Mayor Jordan started the Matrix Program, which offers the homeless a chance to obtain shelter and services but also treats them as adults, asking them to take responsibility for their own lives. The program's many opponents are upset because it reasserts the public's right to safe streets and a decent quality of life by actively enforcing public-nuisance laws.

Each week, Monday through Friday, a team of social workers and mental-health workers goes to various locations in downtown San Francisco to contact homeless people. The team is accompanied by two police officers, who stay in the background unless asked for assistance. The social workers approach the homeless on the streets and explain that housing is available at below-market rates (never more than $280 a month) to those willing to have their rent automatically deducted from their General Assistance checks, SSI payments, or other income source. The Matrix team also tries to talk those who have alcohol or drug problems into entering treatment programs and encourages and helps the mentally ill to find psychiatric help. No one is required to participate in any of the programs.

San Francisco's maximum monthly General Assistance grant for an individual is $345, one of the highest levels in the state. To qualify for a GA grant a person need only claim that he has been a resident of the city for 15 days, have a green card if he is an alien, and have no money in the bank. Of the 15,000 San Franciscans receiving GA benefits, 3,000 claim to be homeless. GA recipients are also eligible for up to $90 a month in food stamps. Recipients can obtain free meals at various locations, and their health care is provided at no charge by various city-operated medical clinics or by San Francisco General Hospital. San Francisco's generosity costs taxpayers more than $12 million a year.

In exchange for these benefits, the city is asking only that the homeless obey certain basic rules designed to protect the public. Under the Matrix Program, the police have issued citations and made arrests for such offenses as public drinking and inebriation, obstruction of sidewalks, camping or sleeping in public parks, littering, public urination and defecation, aggressive panhandling, dumping of refuse, graffiti, vandalism, street prostitution, and the sale of illegal drugs. According to the mayor's office, 60 per cent of police activity under the Matrix Program is related to public drinking or drunkenness. When a person is found to be intoxicated, he is generally taken to either a detox center or a holding cell until he sobers up enough to be released. Most of the other violations have resulted in either a warning or a citation.

THE Matrix Program has been favorably received by downtown businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. The businesses that were being hurt most by the panhandlers and drunkards driving away tourist dollars view the program as a positive step. Merchants along Powell Street, an area congested with tourists, shoppers, and panhandlers, applaud the program, although some express reservations about its ultimate effectiveness. They say the program has deterred the less resolute beggars, but the hard-core, professional panhandlers still prowl Powell Street in search of handouts. A recent series of protests in Union Square by a mix of homeless, their handlers, and leftist clergy was aimed at convincing downtown business owners to rethink their support for the Matrix Program. It did not seem to have much effect.

The assertive enforcement of city ordinances has provoked the anger of homeless advocates, including the Coalition on Homelessness, the American Civil Liberties Union, various left-wing theologians and church groups, and several members of the Board of Supervisors. The program got off to a rocky start in August 1993 when Matrix teams confiscated stolen shopping carts used by homeless people to carry their belongings. The public outcry was harsh, especially from Board of Supervisors President Angela Alioto. Claiming that it was a violation of constitutional rights to confiscate the shopping carts, critics argued that it was the supermarkets' responsibility to keep the shopping carts from being stolen in the first place. The Matrix Program quickly backed down from confiscating the shopping carts, but it has continued enforcing nuisance laws.

Last November the ACLU, along with a local law firm and a group called the Bay Area Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, filed a lawsuit in federal district court on behalf of several homeless people who were issued citations for public-nuisance violations. Their request for a preliminary injunction shutting down the program was denied, and the case is scheduled for hearings this November. Angela Alioto has tried unsuccessfully to get the Board of Supervisors to approve a resolution calling for an end to the Matrix Program. She sees the program as little more than a police action and not a serious attempt to help the homeless.

Miss Alioto, who is interested in running for mayor, has been waging a campaign against Mayor Jordan ever since he took office. Last November she opposed a San Francisco ballot proposition, supported by the mayor, that called for the fingerprinting of GA recipients to cut down on fraud. Miss Alioto claimed fingerprinting would discourage the poor from applying for General Assistance because they would feel criminalized. San Francisco voters passed the measure by a wide margin. □

Peace Comes Dropping Hard

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

DUBLIN

WE HAVE beaten the British Army. So Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein, told a public meeting in Belfast last month. His claim derived a certain credibility from the place in which it was made. He was addressing an estimated 10,000 supporters outside Belfast City Hall. Sinn Fein had never been allowed to hold a meeting in the city center before. Its presence there was an index of the party's increasing acceptability to the authorities. And Sinn Fein means the IRA, a connection Mr.

Mr. O'Brien is the author most recently of The Great Melody, *a biography of Edmund Burke.*

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Adams did not go out of his way, on this occasion, to play down.

The concession over the meeting place is a fruit of the latest stage of what used to be called the "peace process." That term became tarnished in July when Sinn Fein, on the IRA's instructions, dumped the Downing Street Declaration at its conference in Letterkenny. Nobody can now expect "the permanent cessation of violence" that we were led to expect at the start of this year.

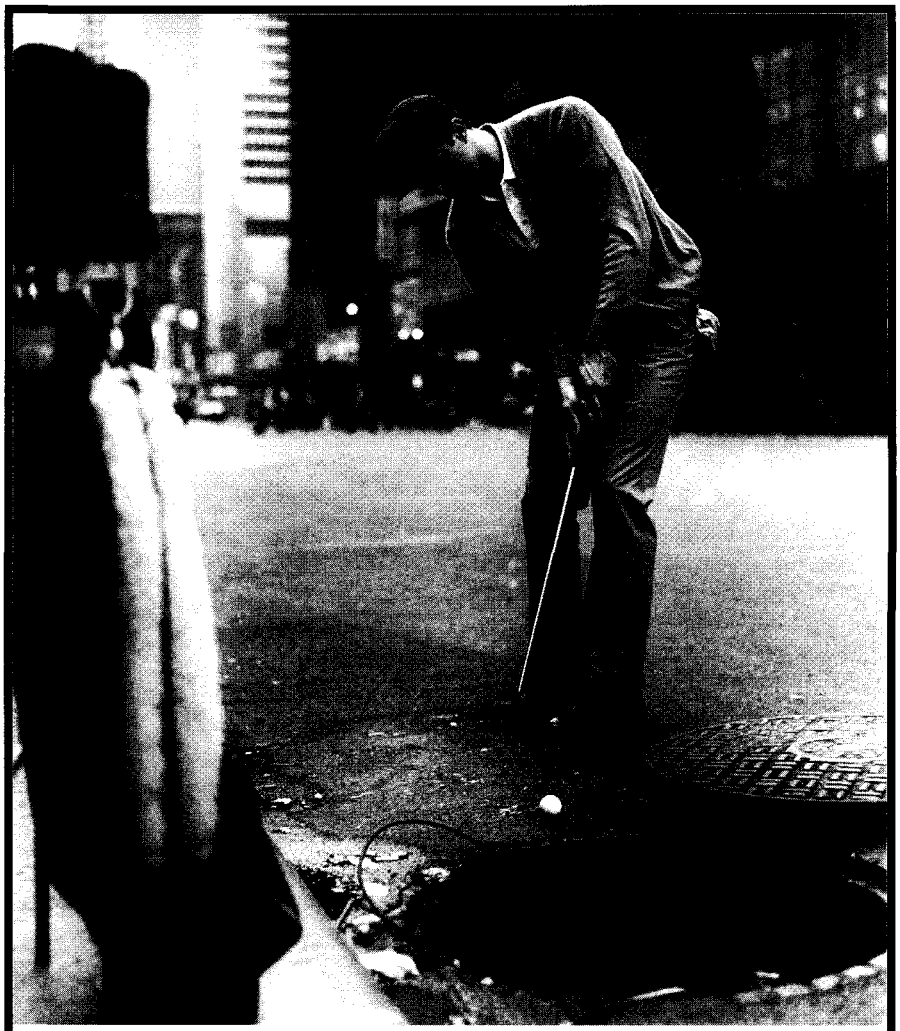
SO WHAT happens now? We were told that if Sinn Fein and the IRA did not deliver on that permanent cessation, there would be a "major security clampdown." The IRA has not delivered, but the response has been: "Well, if you won't give us a permanent cessation, won't you at least give us a ceasefire? Please?"

The IRA will probably agree to a ceasefire sometime this year—and probably before the November elections in the United States. But first it is going to see what can be squeezed out of the *pre*-ceasefire situation. The message is that the IRA is prepared to consider a ceasefire, but that others—meaning the British and Irish governments—must "help to create the conditions for a ceasefire." "Create the conditions" is the formula, in IRA-speak, that takes the place of the pre-Letterkenny formula of "seeking clarifications" to the Downing Street Declaration. Both are euphemisms for concessions.

When the ceasefire comes, as it will, the word will be: "What will you give us for an extension of the ceasefire?" And when the ceasefire breaks down, as it will, the word will be: "What will you give us for another ceasefire?"

"The quest for peace"—the phrase currently in vogue—is a more subdued version of the tarnished "peace process" and even more congenial to the IRA, since the two governments are settling for less. Ceasefires, and the hopes and expectations they arouse, will be central from now on to the psychological warfare that accompanies the IRA's armed struggle.

Mr. Adams's friends have not beaten the British Army, nor are they beating it. But they are winning the psychological war. They have established an ascendancy over the minds of their adversaries—the governments in Dublin and London.



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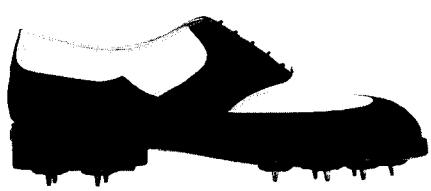

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This is not yet as obvious in London as it is in Dublin; but it is still more obvious in Belfast, in the Northern Ireland Office, than it is in Dublin. A yearning to propitiate the IRA is evident in two statements by Sir Hugh Annesley, chief constable of Belfast and now in overall charge of security in Northern Ireland. In July, with the IRA's armed struggle continuing unabated, Sir Hugh paid tribute to the sincerity of those in the IRA whom he believed to be working for peace. In August he indicated that an IRA ceasefire would be followed by a scaling down of the British military presence in Northern Ireland.

That last promise was contradicted by Malcolm Rifkind, the British secretary of state for defense. But the tenor of Sir Hugh's statements and policies, including the authorization for Sinn Fein's rally outside Belfast City Hall, is believed to have the approval of Sir Patrick Mayhew, secretary of state for Northern Ireland. So the British government appears to be speaking with two voices. More good news for the IRA.

In the U.S., too, the outlook is bright for the IRA. President Clinton, through his national-security advisors, has been sending signals to Sinn Fein. Formally, the message is unexceptionable: the President is asking Sinn Fein and the IRA to accept the Downing Street Declaration and grant a permanent cessation of violence. Actually, what is being discussed is a ceasefire, and there are the makings of a deal there: the IRA to accord a ceasefire and maintain it through the second Tuesday in November, and the President to send his peace envoy during the ceasefire.

From the point of view of the Clinton Administration, this would make sense. The President has his mind fixed on the elections. A ceasefire, followed by a visit by a peace envoy, could easily be made to look like a breakthrough for peace. It would certainly hold the "Irish" vote in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and would make a fine impression throughout the nation.

For the IRA, also, such a deal would be most attractive: a vision of a ceremony on the White House lawn would begin to heave into sight. In the meantime the peace envoy would be a reliable ally for Sinn Fein–IRA in pressing for whatever concessions could be squeezed out of hopes for extending the ceasefire.

There is so much to be gained by both sides that it would be surprising if the deal were not concluded. The ceasefire will be an episode within an armed struggle that is being conducted by the IRA with increasing political and psychological sophistication. The IRA believes British withdrawal is around the corner and is preparing for the Bosnia-style civil war between Catholics and Protestants that would follow. It has indicated that it will continue to "defend the Catholic population" against the Protestant loyalist paramilitaries. In so doing, the IRA will be consolidating its power over the Catholic areas in preparation for the next—and, it believes, decisive—round with the British.

The now discredited "peace process" has been a political bonanza for Sinn Fein–IRA. The "quest for peace" looks even more promising. □

Once Is Enough

TODD SEAVEY

Konstantin Valov

SAUGERTIES, N.Y.

A MAN hasn't fully lived until he has lain in a field at three o'clock on a summer morning covered in Off!, eating nachos, and waiting for the dance band Deee-Lite to come onstage.

All was going well as the first night of Woodstock '94 came to an end. Even the fact that Ticketmaster had lied to us wasn't bothering me. Ticketmaster had said there would be buses going back to Manhattan on Sunday evening, but on the way to Woodstock we were told there would be no buses until Monday.

That was a common pattern at Woodstock '94: for everything that went wonderfully, there was something hellish. The same might be said of the first Woodstock, though, and of the Sixties in general. The week I was born, in August 1969, saw the first Woodstock concert and the Manson Family murders.

The hellish part of my Friday night at Woodstock '94 came when I tried to get to sleep. Never try to sleep in the middle of a "rave" (a techno-music dance party), no matter how comfortable your sleeping bag is. Since techno music is largely syncopated electronic noises instead of conventional melodies, I would just about get accustomed to a thudding, whirring noise and start drifting off to sleep when a screeching, buzzing noise would be added. At one point, a Strauss waltz was combined with the sound of ringing telephones.

My friend Paul Taylor (a fetus during the first Woodstock and now a Harvard Law grad) had accompanied me to the concert, and he now decided he had had enough of the techno music. So we got out of our sleeping bags and made our way toward the North Stage, on the opposite side of the confusing maze of the Woodstock grounds. Behind us, the rave stage screeched and flashed strobe lights until 6 in the morning.

During the walk we passed a knot of people standing around Joe Walsh, guitar player for the Eagles (who were not at the concert). "Why would Joe Walsh be telling people stories at 5:30 in the morning?" I asked Paul. Showing little reverence for classic rock, my friend responded, "Because he's a doped-out has-been," and trudged ahead.

My greatest Woodstock regret is that we did not sleep near the North Stage from the beginning that night. We might have met one of my favorite

Mr. Seavey is a writer in New York City.

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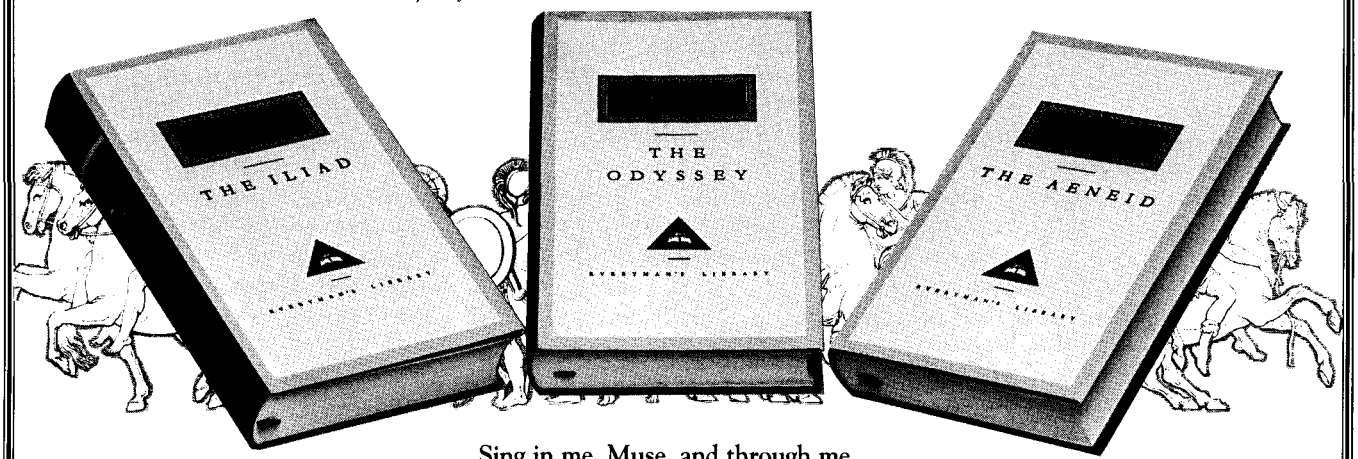

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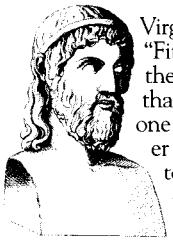

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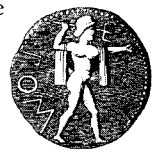

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National Review 9/94

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celebrities. The man who would sit next to me on the train back to Manhattan on Sunday said the MTV host Kennedy—so far as I know the only Republican VJ on that network—went around waking people near the North Stage in the wee hours, asking their opinions of the concert and whether they would engage in free love with her if she offered. "No comment" was apparently a common answer, evidence that some things have changed between the two Woodstocks.

DAY TWO found Paul and me within a hundred feet of the North Stage, fortified by about an hour of sleep and still discussing some of the previous night's oddities. We had seen the Eco-Village, where environmentalist info booths seemed to be functioning as a sort of moral justification for the concert (full of signs with slogans such as "Export oranges, not dolphins," which must have been penned by a Californian). Greenpeace and Revolution Books were the most prominent participants, although I was intrigued by Libearty, an organization opposed to "Chinese bear farming."

Balancing the Eco-Village (and no doubt paying more of the bills) was the highly commercial Surreal Field, which was essentially a trade show for computer companies and video-game manufacturers (as well as the site of a bucking and heaving thrill ride based on the Peter Gabriel video for the song "Kiss That Frog").

The music of Day Two, the main day of Woodstock, helped bring out some of the cultural contrasts among the audience members. The strongest presence seemed to be white trash, including lots of men with beer bellies, bad haircuts, and one article of camouflage clothing apiece, who climbed the Porto-Johns and raised their arms triumphantly as if they had won a game of King of the Mountain. I'm guessing they were at Woodstock mainly for Metallica, Aerosmith, and the classic rock bands of the Sixties and Seventies.

I identified more with the alternative rock crowd who came to see punkish bands like Collective Soul and Red Hot Chili Peppers. The contrast between these two subcultures was probably the most striking when old-timers Crosby, Stills, and Nash, who sang lines such as, "Love the one you're with," left the stage and were succeeded by Nine Inch Nails, who screamed lines such as, "Bow down before the one you serve / You're going to get what you deserve."

Lest conservative readers worry that there was no religious element in any of this, I should note there was some gospel, as well as the punk band Violent Femmes, whose evangelical Christianity pops up at odd times in their songs, producing lyrics such as: "I was so pleased to learn that He's inside me / In my time of trouble He will hide me / I dig the black girls / I dig the black girls."

Speaking of blacks, it was striking how few there were at Woodstock '94. When the lead singer of Blind Melon

"I'm sorry, Mildred, but we're just not compatible."

said he loved looking out at "all the different colors" of the faces in the audience, wishful thinking must have been tinting his vision, because I don't think I glimpsed more than a dozen black people in the entire 400,000-person throng.

The most powerful Woodstock subculture was unquestionably the Mud People, who rolled and slam-danced in the huge mud pits that formed in Saturday's rain. Years from now, if I'm in a dense crowd and someone yells "Mud People! Coming through!" I will probably leap back instinctively to give them free passage and avoid being slimed.

The concert held greater dangers than mud, though. According to the last count I heard, four people were dead, at least one killed in the mosh pit (the area where most of the slam-dancing and crowd-surfing went on). At one point, the emcee of the concert, inspired by the sight of the crowd-surfers being passed over the heads of their fellow concert-goers, suggested we pass garbage bags over our heads, adding trash to them as we did so, to help clean up. This ill-conceived plan resulted in an interminable avalanche of garbage bags passing through the crowd. Someone shouted, "I paid $135 for *you* to clean it up!" Paul noted that the one time he got walloped by a crowd-surfer, it was while he was trying to get a garbage bag off his head. Such are the unforeseen costs of overzealous environmentalism.

Another danger of overzealous environmentalism is upsetting the crowd. When a speaker from Greenpeace went onstage and launched into a long, aimless rant about ecological degradation and social transformation, people began shouting, "Get him off!" and even, "Shoot him!"

That's probably as good an indication as any that this Woodstock did not represent a unified cultural movement, or even a group of people terribly interested in loving one another—which is fine with me. As the lead rapper of Cypress Hill so eloquently put it (just before crazed slam-dancers caused me to flee the North Stage): "They call us Generation X. But I say we're Generation F--- You!"

It doesn't bother me that there was no sense of common purpose at Woodstock '94 (I'm sure the spiritual unity of the first Woodstock is largely mythical). Half a million individuals should have diverse goals. One of mine is to make sure Woodstock, exciting though it was, *remains* a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me. Far from wanting to revel some more with my mud-covered brethren, I think I'll stick to the 9-to-5 job, finish writing my book, find a steady girlfriend, and vow to decorate my next apartment like an adult.

The morning of Day Three found Paul and me at the Valley Farm bed and breakfast in Saugerties. We were lucky—affordable rooms were hard to come by in the tiny town that weekend. As rain continued to turn Woodstock into a mud pit and the collapse of security doubled the number of people at the already densely packed concert, Paul and I decided to head back to Manhattan. For once, the city seemed civil and spacious. □

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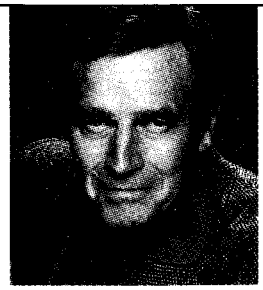

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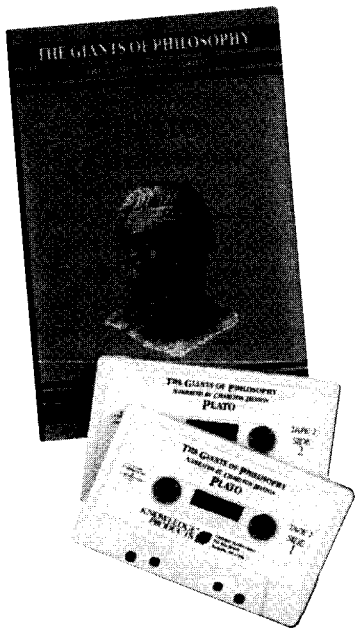

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RANDOM WALK

THIS month is the official one-year anniversary of the enactment of Clintonomics. My friends in the Treasury Department and the White House are all smiles and have cracked the champagne. Unemployment is still low; growth is steady. And best of all, Alice Rivlin says the deficit's going to fall all the way down to $220 billion this year. Hey, that's almost as low as it was in the debt-filled Reagan years.

I hate to be the skunk at the Rose Garden party, but Wall Street doesn't seem to be sharing in the White House's celebration. All last year Laura Tyson, head of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, said declining interest rates were the financial market's signal of enthusiastic approval for the Clinton tax package. Okay, Laura, I believe you. But here is what happened to interest rates since the day the bill was passed:

	30-Year Mortgage	3-Month T-Bill
August 9, 1993	7.17	3.03
August 9, 1994	8.38	4.42

Looks to me like a vote of no confidence.

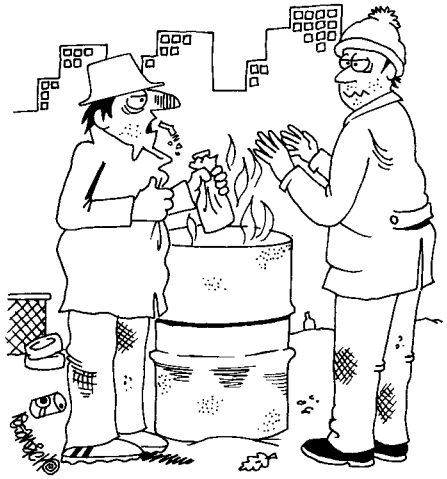
Then there's the supposedly glorious jobs picture. Unemployment surely is low. But why? Alan Reynolds of the Hudson Institute writes that so far in 1994 "there has been no growth of the labor force at all—zero. . . . Unemployment is low only because fewer people are working."

Remember when Labor Secretary Robert Reich charged that Reaganomics had created jobs only for hamburger flippers? (I always thought that 18 million burger flippers translated into an awful lot of Big Macs.) It turns out that 85 per cent of the new jobs under Clinton's tenure have fallen into the Bureau of Labor Statistics' three lowest-paying job categories—compared with 69 per cent under Reagan. Add to that the fact that since Clinton came to Washington the economy has lost 56,000 manufacturing jobs. How's Jim Carville going to explain these numbers?

The ultimate point of any deficit-reduction package is to raise the savings rate so as to increase investment and boost living standards. Reynolds shows that personal savings through July was $186 billion. This is lower than in 1992 ($248 billion) and 1993 ($193 billion). Only in Washington would anyone expect that when you tax people more they will save more, not less.

So here's my assessment of Clintonomics after one year: Falling dollar, rising interest rates, low savings, a stagnant job pool, and a lot of angry taxpayers. Happy anniversary.

■ A group of astute prognosticators from Boston is unafraid to take on the optimists on Wall Street and in the Clinton Administration. David Ranson, Marc Miles, and Richard Salsman of H. C. Wainwright and Company Economics expect that "economic momentum will be slowing dramatically" along with a sizable decline of corporate earnings and a long bear market in stocks.



"If debt is a measure of consumer confidence, I'm absolutely bold."

The Wainwright people use a supply-side incentive model that relies heavily on market prices. They correctly predicted the growth surge of 1993–94 in response to large interest-rate declines in 1991–92. Now, however, with rates marching upward and a normal lag of 12 to 18 months, they expect this year's 4 per cent real growth to drop off to 2.5 per cent in 1995, with "something bordering on recession" in 1996. This slump will be accompanied by a downturn in business profits. Company price–earning multiples have already begun to contract, and the level of reported earnings will soon follow downward.

The Wainwright economists believe the stock market has already begun to "price in" this earnings-slump forecast, implying the likelihood of a major sell-off, quite possibly before this year ends. Making the outlook even worse, inflation is projected to rise to at least 4 per cent, following last year's run-up in gold prices and this year's strength in industrial-raw-material commodities. Rising producer and consumer price reports are typically the final signs of higher inflation, reflecting monetary forces put in place at least a year earlier.

On interest rates, however, the Boston seers are surprisingly optimistic. Expecting no more than 5 per cent in the money market—and the Fed's latest move has already sent these rates up to 4.75 per cent—Wainwright expects a *rally* in bond prices that would drop yields back to under 7 per cent. But even if President Clinton makes a deal with the Fed in 1996, with Alan Greenspan providing lower short rates in return for reappointment as head of the central bank, it would not hasten election-year recovery. This is because people tend to defer spending and investment, including home buying, during a declining-interest-rate trend, hoping to get the lowest possible financing cost.

This forecast has ominous implications for Clinton's re-election. Even more notable is the possibility of a major stock-market fall before the congressional elections. If Wainwright is correct, then an election-eve stock-market wake-up call could install Bob Dole and Newt Gingrich as leaders of the Senate and House. —GEKKO

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Should America Be a 'Multicultural' Society?

President Ronald Reagan warned in 1983, "This country has lost control of its borders, and no country can sustain that..."

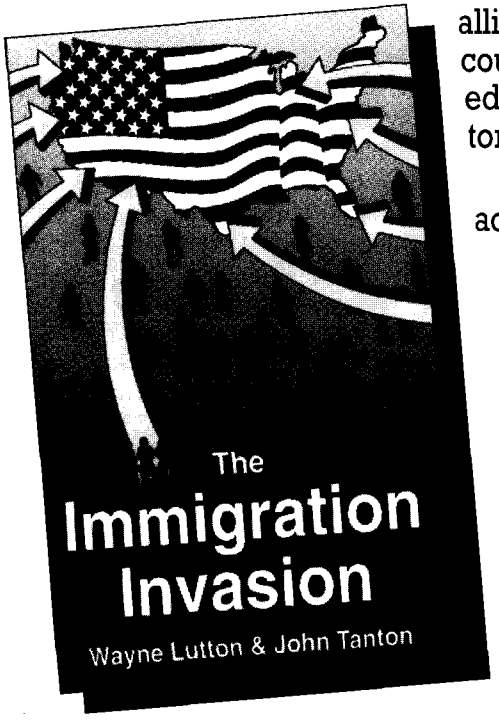
Events have proven him right. Every year, more than 300,000 illegal aliens settle here permanently. At the same time, the U.S. admits nearly one million legal immigrants annually, the highest sustained level of immigration in our history.

Studies show that on average these immigrants – nearly 90% of whom are from the Third World – are poorly skilled and uneducated, creating a burden on taxpayers and the economy. Unless immigration laws are changed, the net costs of immigration will reach $60 billion a year by 2003.

But the costs of unrestricted immigration are not the only objection to the "multicultural" society that Congress and the President have decided to create. Our very nationhood is at stake.

Massive immigrant enclaves in our nation's cities are rapidly becoming foreign colonies of unprecedented political and cultural influence, fragmenting the country into competing ethnic groups. Bankrolled by America's wealthiest and most prestigious corporations and foundations, ethnic advocacy groups and their allies are already mobilizing these colonies to dismantle our country's traditions in favor of "group rights," multicultural education, and racial quotas. Bosnia today could be America tomorrow.

It is time for America's citizens to speak out and take direct action to conserve America's heritage for future generations.



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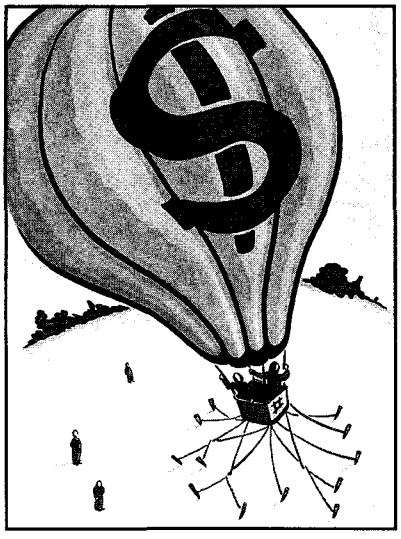

Out of Bretton Woods

FREE-FLOATING ANXIETY

Fans of stable money are nostalgic for a system of pegged exchange rates. They shouldn't be.

MILTON FRIEDMAN

THE fiftieth anniversary of the Bretton Woods conference, which created the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), has been the occasion for a triumph of nostalgia over reality. Nostalgia has converted the twin institutions into major pillars of postwar expansion, transformed the 1971 termination of the system of pegged exchange rates established by Bretton Woods into a major policy mistake, and produced expressions of support for the re-establishment of such a system.

Reality is very different. The IMF and the World Bank have been major failures; they have done far more harm than good and have imposed heavy costs on their members. The world would be far better off today if neither had been established. Both are excellent examples of one of my favorite generalizations: If a private enterprise is a failure, it will close down unless it can get the government to bail it out; if a government enterprise is a failure, it will be expanded.

Even the most casual empiricism suggests that the World Bank and its more recent junior accessory, a reformed IMF, have done more harm than good. They have distributed many billions of dollars of so-called loans, most of them really grants, supposedly to foster the development of poor countries. But the most successful cases of development have been in the countries that have relied least on the Bank and the Fund—the Four Tigers, and more recently Mainland China. Most of the countries that have received extensive assistance from the Bank have done very poorly—India, for example, and most African and Latin American countries.

The reason is clear. The problem with the poor countries is mostly a government sector that imposes excessive restrictions on economic activity and transfers both power and wealth unto itself—in short, too strong a government. But to whom do the World Bank and the IMF make loans? To the government. Hence they strengthen government control, providing money that the people in power can use to entrench their position, in countries where the urgent need is to reduce government power and control. They encourage the propensity of governments to construct monuments, which is indeed what the major output of the Bank has been.

The IMF's assignment was to supervise a system of agreed-on exchange rates among member countries by providing a) assistance to smooth over temporary balance-of-payments problems and b) a forum for agreeing on changes in exchange rates in response to a "fundamental disequilibrium" as judged by the IMF. The agreement linked the U.S. dollar to gold and the currency of other countries to the U.S. dollar. It provided that all members other than the United States would specify an official exchange rate in terms of the U.S. dollar, that each was free to make one change of up to 10 per cent in that exchange rate on its own, but that any other changes required the approval of the IMF; and that the United States would commit itself to buy gold from and sell gold to foreign central banks or other monetary authorities at $35 an ounce in unlimited amounts at their request. The IMF arrangements were intended to eliminate the direct exchange controls that had become pervasive ever since Hjalmar Schacht introduced them in Germany in the late 1930s.

Despite the commitment to fixed exchange rates, numerous changes in exchange rates occurred during the 25 years after the IMF began operation, including appreciation of the German mark in 1961 and 1969, and major devaluation of the British pound in 1949 and 1967, and of the French franc in 1949, 1959, and 1969. Furthermore, exchange controls continued until 1959.

All in all, the much-vaunted Bretton Woods system of pegged exchange rates operated as intended for only eight years—from 1959 to 1967—and even those years were not free from exchange-rate changes. And it worked then only because the U.S. was willing to finance the payments deficits of other member countries.

Mr. Friedman is a Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution.

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When President Nixon closed the gold window on August 15, 1971—an act which I believed then, and still believe, he should have taken immediately on his inauguration [see sidebar]—the function that the IMF had been established to perform, and hence its reason for existence, disappeared. It should have been abolished. But it was a government agency, and so instead it simply converted itself into a junior World Bank and expanded. It became an international busybody, offering underpriced loans to countries in trouble at the price of their following its advice on domestic policy—to judge by results, occasionally good, but perhaps more often bad.

True, there have been large, sometimes violent movements in exchange rates during the period since 1971 when exchange rates have been flexible. But, first, some of those are themselves attributable to government interventions, and, second, they have not led to the introduction of direct controls on imports, exports, and capital movements that it was one purpose of Bretton Woods to eliminate but that in practice it kept alive.

As to the first, the February 1987 Louvre agreement, under which Japan and Germany undertook to support the exchange rate for the dollar, bears much responsibility not only for the large exchange-rate movements at the end of that year but also for the subsequent stock- and land-price explosion in Japan (the "bubble"), which in turn led the Bank of Japan to step on the brake so hard that it produced a major depression, from which Japan is only beginning to emerge. That depression in turn played a major role in producing the sharp appreciation in the dollar value of the yen. The Japanese taxpayers have paid a heavy price for the Bank of Japan's repeated interventions in foreign-exchange markets. Indeed, I believe that if the yen had been allowed to float freely throughout the 1980s, Japan would have avoided the bubble and the subsequent collapse.

As for pegged exchange rates, there have been repeated efforts both before and after the collapse of Bretton Woods to establish such systems. (For brevity, I start with the end of the war.) For eight years during the Bretton Woods period there was also a European Payments Union designed to foster pegged exchange

Confidential Memorandum to President-Elect Richard Nixon

The full text of this December 1968 memorandum appears in The Merits of Flexible Exchange Rates: An Anthology, *Leo Melamed, ed. (1988).*

THE first few weeks of the new administration that takes over in January, 1969, will offer a unique opportunity to set the dollar free and thereby eliminate for years to come balance of payments restraints on U.S. economic policy. If this opportunity is not seized, it will not recur. Later events may force the administration to take measures that it could at first take voluntarily, but if so, the measures will then involve great political and social cost. . . .

Three strictly comparable recent events indicate how far-reaching the consequences of bold action can be. 1) On one Sunday afternoon in 1948, Ludwig Erhard abolished price controls, setting the mark free (he did it on a Sunday afternoon because the U.S., UK, and French occupation offices were closed and so unable to countermand his order). He thereby unleashed the German economic miracle and assured the Christian Democratic Party unquestioned political dominance for several decades. 2) Charles de Gaulle in 1959–60 devalued the franc sharply, established a new franc, and promised a sound money policy. He thereby laid the basis for the balance of payments surpluses and accumulation of gold that enabled him for the next decade to have far greater political power in world affairs than the economic and political position of France justified. . . . 3) Harold Wilson exemplifies a wasted opportunity. If he had floated the pound on first gaining office, putting all the blame, as he could then have done, on the allegedly "irresponsible" policies of the prior Tory regime, it is very likely that he would still be firmly in the saddle, and that the Labour Party would hold unquestioned political power. His failure to take this step forced on him one unpopular expedient after another—and did not even prevent later devaluation. He got the worst of all worlds—and so did Britain.

Shortly after the inauguration of a new President in January, he should proclaim the following measures:

1. All restrictions on foreign investment by U.S. corporations are abolished effective immediately and the bureaucratic apparatus for administering them will be dismantled as rapidly as possible.

2. All restrictions on foreign lending by U.S. commercial banks are ended, effective immediately.

3. Congress is being asked to repeal the interest-equalization tax.

4. All other restrictions on payments and trade imposed on balance of payments grounds will be removed as quickly as possible.

5. The U.S. will engage in no further gold transactions. For the time being it will keep its gold stock constant, neither buying nor selling gold either from or to central banks of other countries or in the private market. . . .

6. The U.S. will engage in no exchange transactions in order to affect the rate of exchange between the U.S. dollar and other currencies—neither to peg the rates of exchange at fixed levels nor to manipulate them. The only exchange transactions engaged in by official U.S. agencies will be to acquire the foreign exchange necessary for foreign governmental expenditures or to dispose of foreign exchange acquired in the course of foreign governmental activity. . . .

Why take these bold measures at once? Because if they are not taken at once, the new President, or members of his administration, will inevitably make statements and commitments about gold and exchange rates that will make it very difficult to take such measures except in conditions of great crisis. Never again will the range of options be so wide. The time to fix the roof is in good weather, not when it is raining. . . .

—MILTON FRIEDMAN

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rates among European countries. Like all such arrangements, it broke down, and it was terminated in 1958. The Smithsonian Tunnel, created in December 1971, collapsed in February 1973; the Snake, created by the European Economic Community in April 1972, was joined by a varying number of countries until 1979. It was then buried by the EEC and replaced by a more formal arrangement, the European Monetary System, again with changing membership. The EMS experienced no fewer than 11 devaluations or revaluations from 1979 to 1987, sometimes affecting more than one currency. A period of stability followed, much like that under Bretton Woods from 1959 to 1967, though even shorter. Both periods of stability had the same source: a major country—first the U.S., then Germany—that was willing to finance the balance-of-payments deficits of other members of the exchange agreement.

The system was doomed when the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent unification of Germany made it imperative for West Germany, which had been exporting capital to other members of the EMS, to start exporting it to East Germany instead, and if possible to import capital. The agreed-on exchange rates were not consistent with the new situation, and something had to give. In late 1992, the EMS collapsed with the withdrawal of Britain and Italy.

Similarly, the nineteenth-century gold standard is repeatedly referred to as if it were a model. It did indeed produce stable exchange rates, but beyond that its virtues have been greatly exaggerated. It lasted in full glory from 1879 to 1914, a period that saw in the United States deflation from 1879 to 1896, followed by inflation from 1896 to 1914, during which period there were repeated financial crises, many business fluctuations, a major depression in the 1890s, and a banking panic in 1907 that led to the establishment of the Federal Reserve System. After World War I, the U.S. formally remained on a gold standard, and it was under that system that the monetary authorities produced the Great Depression. All this took place during a period when government spending ranged around 10 per cent of the national income in all major countries, and when governments made no pretense of exercising extensive control over their economies.

Today, when governments in most major countries spend half or even more of the national income and exercise far greater control of the economy, no government would be willing or indeed able to submit itself to the discipline of a strict gold standard. The unwillingness of fairly closely linked countries to submit themselves to the less far-reaching discipline of the European Monetary System is surely persuasive evidence of that proposition. In today's world, political unification must precede monetary unification, not the other way around.

In a recent *Wall Street Journal* op-ed piece (July 15) recommending a return to gold, Judy Shelton started her concluding paragraph: "Until the U.S. begins standing up once more for stable exchange rates as the starting point for free trade . . ." It would be hard to pack more error into so few words. A true gold standard—a unified currency—is indeed consistent with free trade. But a system of pegged exchange rates, such as the original IMF system or the European Monetary System, is an enemy to free trade. It is no accident that the 1992 collapse of the EMS coincided with the agreement to remove controls on the movement of capital, or that the Common Market has not succeeded in more than four decades in achieving free trade, although that was a major objective. I hasten to add that the Common Market has made much progress in reducing trade barriers, but it has been unable to go the whole way precisely because it has consistently sought "stable exchange rates."

THIS is not surprising. Changes are always occurring that affect the demand and supply for a given country's currency—its balance of payments. There are only four ways to adapt to these changes: 1) a rise or decline in the exchange rate; 2) rises or declines in internal prices and output (the primary method under a unified currency); 3) controls over foreign transactions, in the form of tariffs, subsidies on exports, or exchange controls; 4) increases or decreases in foreign-exchange reserves (a secondary method under a unified exchange rate).

Strict free trade would rule out method 3); strict adherence to a fixed exchange rate would rule out method 1), leaving only 2) or 4). But 4) can at best be a temporary recourse, especially if the changed circumstances lead to an outflow of foreign-exchange reserves, which are necessarily limited (this forced President Nixon's hand in 1971). There remains only 2), rises or declines in internal prices and output. It is inconceivable that a national central bank would stand idly by while changes affecting its balance of payments produced either a significant inflation or a serious recession. By its actions, it would force either controls on trade or a departure from the fixed exchange rate. This is not purely theoretical speculation, as it was when I wrote an article on flexible exchange rates published in 1953; it has occurred time and again since then. The lesson is that for any group of economic entities to have a unified currency, there can be at most one independent central bank. ("At most," because with a pure commodity standard, e.g., a gold standard, no central bank is needed.)

To close on a personal note that also reveals my interest, I spent the final three months of 1950 as a consultant to the U.S. Marshall Plan agency in Paris. My primary assignment was to analyze the Schuman Plan for a European Coal and Steel Community, the precursor to the Common Market. I concluded then, for the reasons summarized in the prior two paragraphs, that the Schuman Plan could succeed in its objectives only if it was accompanied by a system of flexible exchange rates. Since that was clearly ruled out, I recommended that the U.S. oppose the Schuman Plan—my first real evidence on how much easier it is to advise than to get one's advice followed. Nothing that has happened in the more than four decades since has given me reason to believe that my advice was wrong. □

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

August 22, 1994

Dear Rusty,

I'm up late, sitting at the kitchen table, unable to sleep. Tipper just got back from Rwanda, and she keeps having nightmares, sitting bolt upright and screaming.

"I can't get it out of my mind, Al. The misery. The chaos. The squalor. The fighting factions." She shuddered in horror.

"Tip, you've got to forget about Rwanda."

"Rwanda? I mean the Clinton administration."

"Don't you mean the Clinton-Gore administration?" I prodded.

She gave me one of her classic Tipper looks.

"Oh, Al," she sighed.

She tried to go back to sleep, but frankly, she tossed and turned so much I came downstairs to thumb through the Patagonia catalog. I had pretty much decided to order the reverse-fleeced shelled-capilene pullover cardigan in the color "wetlands bog" (page 34, $497) when Roger Altman rang.

"Do you like me, Al?" he asked. "Does anyone like me?" I could tell that he'd been drinking.

"Of course I like you, Roger."

"'Cause that's all I've ever wanted, you know," he slurred. "Just to be liked. To be treated like a person."

"That's all any of us want, Roger," I said.

"Lemme ask you something, Al. Do you think that if I resign the office of Deputy Secretary of the Treasury that Bill'll like me again. Like me enough to make me Secretary of the Treasury?"

"I'm not sure, Roger. That would kind of defeat the purpose of the resignation, wouldn't it?"

"Guess I'll resign," he said glumly. "And go back to the Blackstone Group. That's what I get for serving the President. A one-way ticket to a dead-end job."

"C'mon, Roger," I said, cheering him up, "I read somewhere you made ten million dollars a year."

"Twenty, actually. But you know something, Al? After you've controlled all the money in existence, twenty million a year seems small potatoes."

And then all I heard was snoring. I had barely turned a page in the Patagonia catalog when the phone rang again. This time, it was Tony Coelho.

"Is it too late to call?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "I'm not usually up this late."

"You're not? How do you trade on the Hang Seng market in Hong Kong?"

"I don't."

"What? You're mostly a Nikkei guy?"

"Ummm....not really."

"London?"

"No, Tony. None of those. I have all of my investments in a blind trust."

"Blind trust? What's your angle?"

"No angle, Tony. I'm Vice President of the U.S."

"Oh, yeah. Right. Right. Anyway, here's why I called. I just want you to know that I've just been hired as an informal adviser to the White House. Now, I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, 'Al? What's old Tony the C. going to get paid?' Well, let me be the first to tell you that good old Tony the C. isn't going to get one thin dime—not one red cent—from the U.S. Treasury. No way, no how."

"Gosh, Tony, that's pretty generous," I said.

"Yes it is, Al. Yes I am. But you know, old Tony the C. has got to eat, doesn't he?

"I guess so."

"I mean, Tony the C., he needs a snack once in a while, don't he? And maybe a new suit of clothes? Who can look old Tony in the eye and say, 'No Tony, you don't deserve even the simplest amenities'?"

"I can't, Tony."

"Of course you can't, Al. And do you know why you can't? Because you're decent, that's why. And a decent guy, well, he doesn't fly off the handle and write a whole bunch of—I'll say it, Al—frankly silly environmental regulations. I've got some clients, Al, who are mighty hurt by all of your enviro-talk. I'd love to arrange a meet-and-greet. Sit down. Eat. Talk. You change a few rules, and old Tony the C. gets a new Lexus. Don't say no and don't say yes. Just say, 'Tony, we'll talk about it tomorrow at the White House,' 'cause that's where I'll be for the next three months. Ciao!"

He had hung up before I could say "ciao" back. To be honest, Rusty, Tony has always made me nervous. A few years ago, Tipper and I threw a dinner party. By the time Tony left, we had each purchased a whole-life insurance and annuity plan, plus we were missing some antique runcible spoons.

After Tony hung up, I watched C-SPAN running a repeat of Bob Kerrey's speech in which he breaks ranks with HRC and withdraws his support for health care. I had watched it earlier, but it was difficult to hear over Tipper's shouting "That should be you! That should be you!"

Then the phone rang again, and I let the machine pick up. It was Tony Coelho again, reminding me that we've all got to eat. And some of us, Rusty, have to go to bed—nightmares or no.

Your pal, Al

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help!!!!

Yesterday's Favorite

Mr. Altman, who recused
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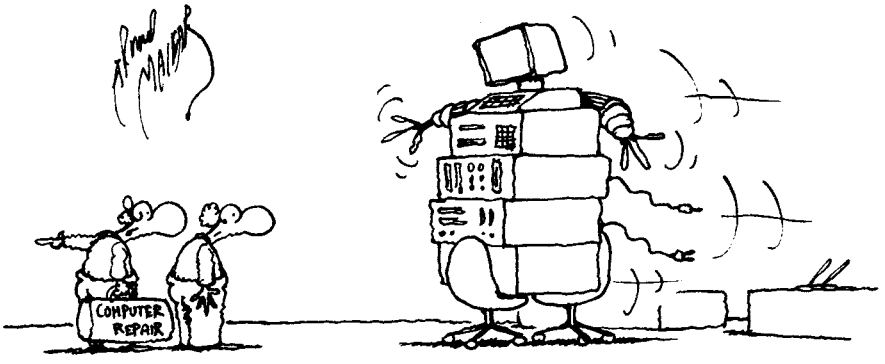
Mr. Altman like dead meat.

W. H. VON DREELE



"Call for backup."

"It's from my womens' lib unit. I've been re-activated."

"We already have a profit sharing plan . . . it's with the IRS."

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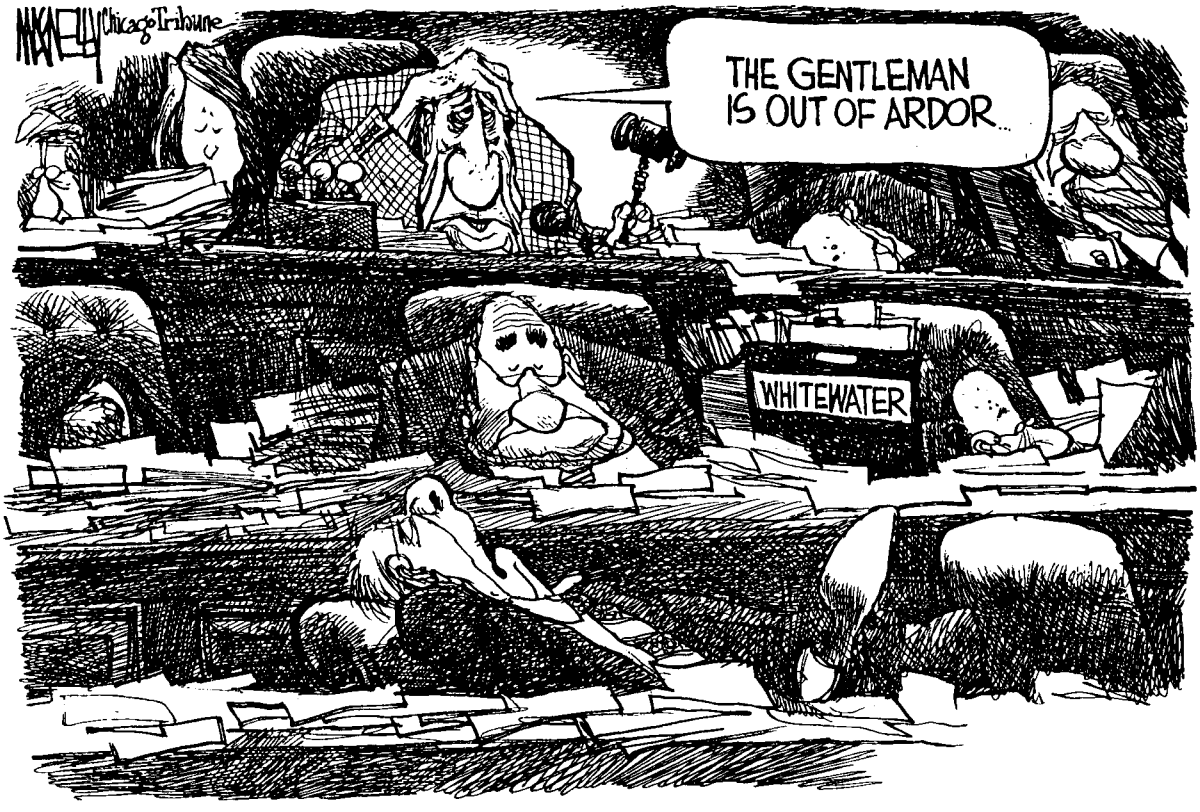

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SCHOOL WARS

American Education Under Siege

Transcendental 'Meditations'

TRACY LEE SIMMONS

WE MIGHT gauge the intellectual heft of today's college students by watching their faces as they gather their texts in the campus bookstore at the beginning of the semester. Expressions of curiosity and expectation as they glance over the titles tend to be outnumbered by those of resigned indifference and, sometimes, shock; the students unite only in disgust at the prices. But the same exercise can also give us an idea of the intellectual heft of the institutions to which these students have handed themselves over for an education.

One of my students recently described her trip to the bookstore to buy the texts for a course I have taught, a survey of major classical works in translation. She looked over the authors, daunted. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plato, Virgil. Standing in the checkout line, she showed them to her roommate, whose response was unexpected.

"You're lucky you get to read the old stuff," she said. "Look at what I have to read." She pointed to slick editions of Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and even *Silence of the Lambs*. "I don't know why I have to read this," she said, thumping the Thomas Harris novel. "I've seen the movie three times. And these other people are on *Oprah* anyway." For me this was vindication of a kind.

A gentleman I know taught history for more than thirty years at a small liberal arts college in Virginia. On the eve of my first day as a teaching assistant several years ago, his advice to me was, "Never let the smart ones get bored," an axiom of instruction much out of favor nowadays. Whenever one of this man's pupils would bristle at some stern correction, whether it be of a misstatement of fact or an error in grammar, he was wont to ask, "You did come to college for an education, didn't you?"

It's a question I dare not ask now. I know the answer for eight out of ten students. Of course they haven't come for an education. They have come to get a union card that will certify four or more years of munificently wasted time and money; some, shrewd and unwilling to validate the orchestrated charade, are bitter enough to call it that. I cannot fault their cynicism. In a glutted marketplace, they know that employers require BAs to work in the mail room and MAs to answer the telephone. A college degree is worth both more and less than it was thirty years ago. The degree-for-higher-pay swap is sure. But mass-market pressures to pass almost everyone through the system with as little fuss as possible have seriously compromised the intellectual value of a college degree.

Most state universities now are no more than pricey vocational schools where instruction aims at training for specific tasks, not at an education that would rigorously inform and quicken the rational faculty. Nor have we in the humanities helped matters; we cannot even agree on what makes great literature great, and some of us have dismissed the concept of greatness as a construct of hegemonic elitists. The rest of us, who consider such sinister "constructs" to be the very sinews of culture, are left to plod on as best we can.

The survey course, even at its best, is aptly named. It is a panorama, a sweeping view of a vast horizon of majestic and often forbidding mountains. The view may be grand, but one can tell only so much from a scenic drive-by. Not much actual learning occurs

Mr. Simmons is an associate editor at NR.

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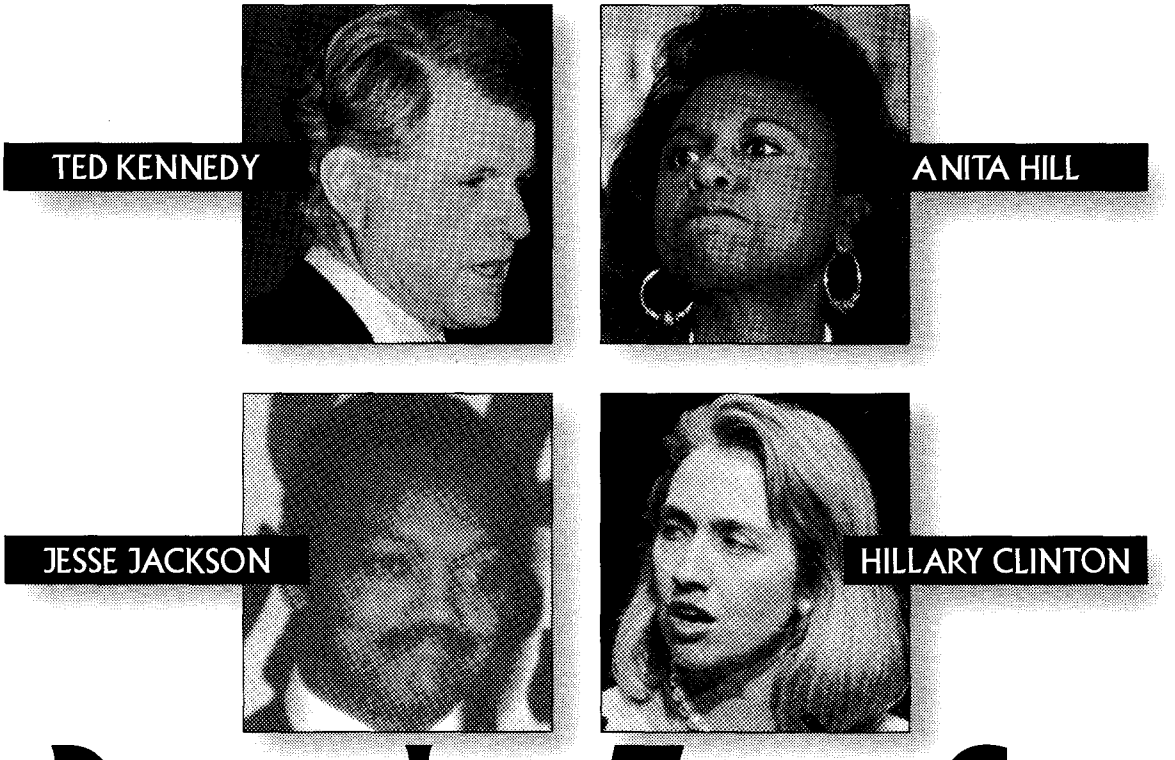

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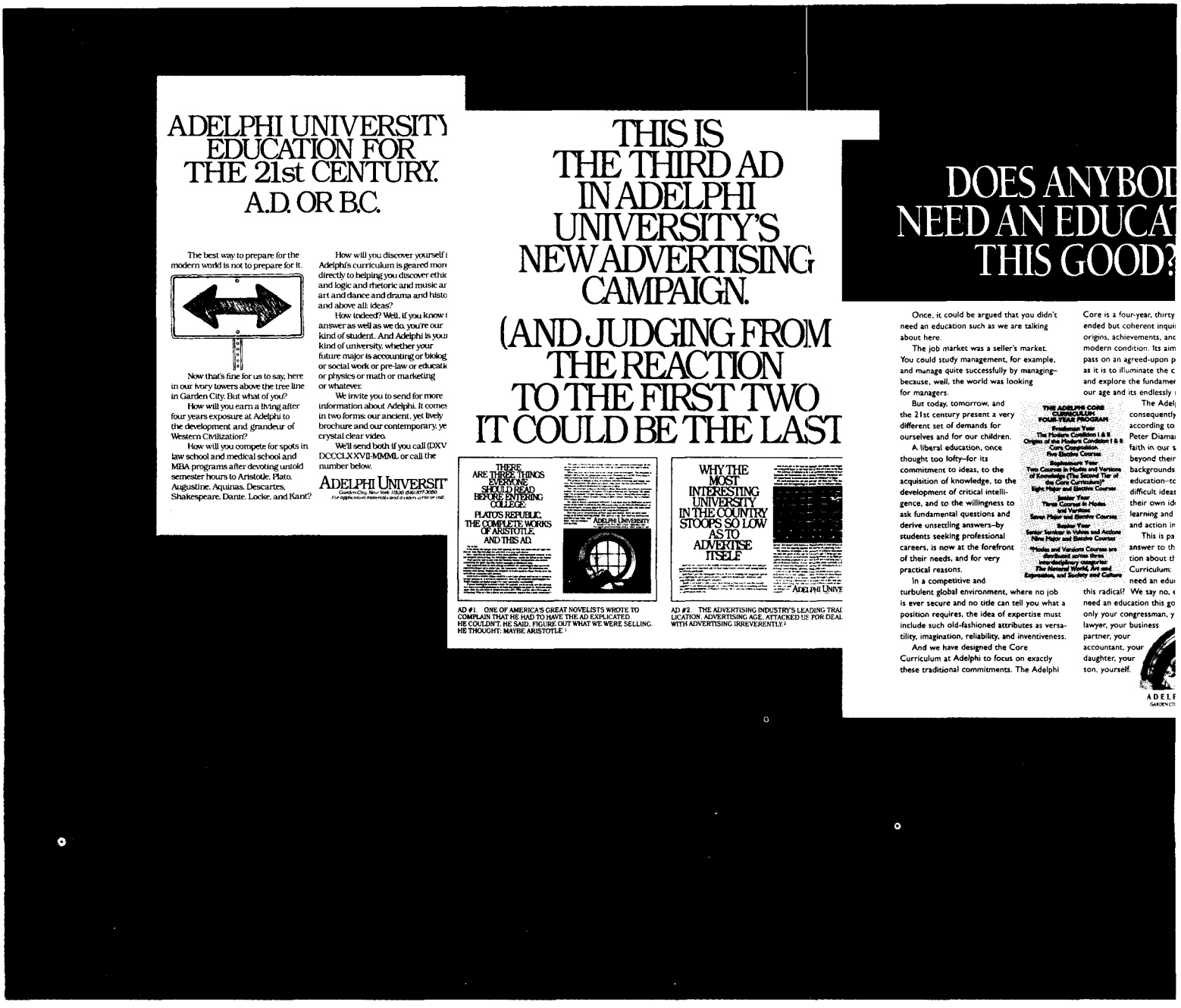
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WHY THE MOST INTERESTING UNIVERSITY IN THE COUNTRY STOOPS SO LOW AS TO ADVERTISE ITSELF
ADELPHI UNIVE
AD #2. THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY'S LEADING TRAI LICATION, ADVERTISING AGE, ATTACKED US FOR DEAL WITH ADVERTISING IRREVERENTLY.
DOES ANYBOI
NEED AN EDUCA
THIS GOOD?
Once, it could be argued that you didn't need an education such as we are talking about here.
The job market was a seller's market. You could study management, for example, and manage quite successfully by managing– because, well, the world was looking for managers.
But today, tomorrow, and the 21st century present a very different set of demands for ourselves and for our children.
A liberal education, once thought too lofty–for its commitment to ideas, to the acquisition of knowledge, to the development of critical intelligence, and to the willingness to ask fundamental questions and derive unsettling answers–by students seeking professional careers, is now at the forefront of their needs, and for very practical reasons.
In a competitive and turbulent global environment, where no job is ever secure and no title can tell you what a position requires, the idea of expertise must include such old-fashioned attributes as versatility, imagination, reliability, and inventiveness.
And we have designed the Core Curriculum at Adelphi to focus on exactly these traditional commitments. The Adelphi
THE ADELPHI CORE CURRICULUM: FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM
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The Modern Condition I & II
Origins of the Modern Condition I & II
Core Composition
Five Elective Courses
Sophomore Year
Two Courses in Modes and Varitions of Knowledge (The Second Tier of the Core Curriculum)*
Eight Major and Elective Courses
Junior Year
Three Courses in Modes and Varitions
Seven Major and Elective Courses
Senior Year
Senior Seminar in Values and Actions
Nine Major and Elective Courses
*Modes and Variants Courses are distributed across three interdisciplinary categories: The Natural World; Art and Expression; and Society and Culture
Core is a four-year, thirty ended but coherent inqui origins, achievements, anc modern condition. Its aim pass on an agreed-upon p as it is to illuminate the c and explore the fundame our age and its endlessly
The Adel consequently according to Peter Diama faith in our s beyond their backgrounds education–c difficult ideas their own id learning and and action in
This is pa answer to th tion about th Curriculum: need an edu We say no, need an education this go only your congressman, y lawyer, your business partner, your accountant, your daughter, your son, yourself.
ADELE
GARDEN CI

WHAT HAS ALL THIS

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We at Adelphi believe we have the seriousness and boldness required to accomplish what many educators and commentators claim is an impossible task – truly educating today's students, teaching them not only what they must know, but what matters; teaching them the habit

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And don't overlook Harvard's extracurriculars: its century-old clubs and organizations are the stuff of legend, along the lines of the Adelphi athletic department. No less than three Adelphi Panther teams currently hold rankings in the national top ten.

For more information about Harvard, the Adelphi of Massachusetts, call (617) 495-1551.

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Don't read this ad until you've first savored Plato. And discovered Aristotle, if not the complete works at least the incomplete collection, maybe the *Ethics* or the *Politics*.

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If you're heading for business school, for example, you'll not only note the obvious: how many successful graduates in all fields that Adelphi can point to. You'll also investigate what you can learn at Adelphi besides LIFO, FIFO, and the other Principles of Accounting. What is it that a liberal arts environment imparts that a trade school can't?

The same is true of the psychology student or the communications major. Or the pre-law and pre-med students who are, after all, students of the Arts and Sciences, respectively.

When you visit our school, ask to see a dean, even the President. (The President of Adelphi still teaches his philosophy class every Thursday at 5:10 PM. If you drop in with an inquiring mind, he'll welcome you, albeit argumentatively).

The premise of Adelphi is that all students (whether of nursing, psychology, business, the humanities, the physical sciences, education, the fine arts) deserve the opportunity to enrich themselves by exposure to ideas.

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BEEN LEADING TO?

of reflection, the ability to discriminate, the love of learning and beauty; and teaching them, too, the practical knowledge indispensable for professional life.

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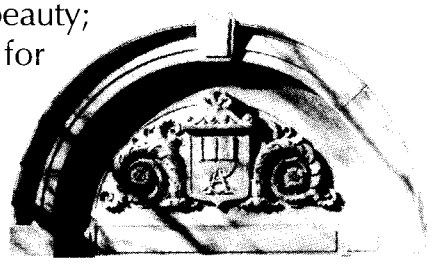
This new college is called the Honors College at Adelphi. For more information, call 1-800-ADELPHI. And watch this space for our new advertising campaign.



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A Commitment to Intellect

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in these courses. Learning happens down in the valleys, where the soil is tilled by hands familiar with the lay of the land. But in an ever more complex world where further complications confine us to ever tinier mental rooms, there is merit in the long look; if it does nothing else, it reminds us of our smallness next to the vastness of everything else—no mean discovery if one is perplexed in the cosmos. Or so I tell each successive group of confused and yawning faces.

If one can't hope to teach much about the ancients in such a course, what is one out to do? Briefly put, one tries to convey a sense of history, of the continuities of thought and feeling through time; to show that, however advanced we believe ourselves to be, prior generations—not the ancients only—have equaled or bettered us in just about every category of spiritual and intellectual activity—in almost everything, in fact, that doesn't depend on the latest material improvements (things like rockets, air conditioners, and anaesthetics). People long dead, particularly the classical poets and philosophers, not only thought our thoughts, they thought them first, gave them shape, often with acute precision, and bequeathed a common, humane vocabulary. Rarely if ever have we expressed the thunder of war as well as Homer or flown a phrase as well as Horace; conveyed unutterable passion as well as Sappho or heroic designs as well as Virgil. These people and their achievements, quite simply, made us who we are, and we can't begin to divine our debt to them unless we can imagine the world without them—which only someone who knows their works well can do. Teaching and learning about those who have made the modern world possible, with all its strengths and flaws, become acts of gratitude.

For a time I began my survey with Homer, an obvious choice chronologically but a great stumbling block for those unaccustomed to reading anything more taxing than the sports page. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* demand concentration, even in translation, and several students had fled by the third week. Aeschylus was too dense, Plato too pedantic. I needed a work that would lift the students' minds out of their own time without forcing them to leave behind a sense of their own time's concerns. Then, two years ago, came an idea: I would begin the course with the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius.

The *Meditations* is not one of the major works. Marcus Aurelius, a Roman emperor during the middle of the second century of the Christian era, is not a major author. Yet this brief collection of thoughts, impressions, and anecdotes occupied a niche amongst educated readers until two or three generations ago. Translations abounded. It became for many Victorians a kind of self-help book: a smattering of maxims and reminders that did not encumber the reader and conceivably might help him through a tough patch in his life. It was bedstand reading.

The book may now be enjoying a resurgence. One minuscule new edition of a kind you're likely to find in the "inspiration" section of a bookstore carries a blurb that says it continues to "inspire all who struggle to live a meaningful and productive life in a troubled age." Another is marketed with the assertion that the *Meditations* has had, after the Bible, the greatest impact of any book on Bill Clinton—a referral that, if you've read the book, strikes you as odd.

The book as we have it is the journal Marcus kept while on military campaigns against the barbarians near the end of his life. Like most journals, it wanders with no clear purpose or theme. But, against the predictions of my colleagues, students have taken to it with alacrity. I think I know why.

This book typifies the approach to philosophy that dominated the Western civilized world from Hellenistic times to the end of the Roman Empire, which held that the cardinal aim of philosophic effort was to show us, not where we came from or where we were going, but how to live. The idea was to cultivate virtue, to discover a code to live by—in this case, a stoicism which was, writes translator Maxwell Staniforth, "manly, rational, and temperate, a code which insisted on just and virtuous dealing, self-discipline, unflinching fortitude, and complete freedom from the storms of passion."

Whatever else this description may signify, it does not seem to fit the current cultural environment. And it may be that many of the intelligent young are drawn to it for just this reason. One told me what a liberating experience reading the *Meditations* was after 12 years in the public schools, where he was constantly reminded that he and his generation could not control their own impulses. Another, a strung-out but smart fellow with hair down to his belt, asked if he could delay turning in an essay by a day because he had lent his copy to a troubled friend. "He needed it more than I did last night," he explained. (I inquired no further.) One young woman, after the course was finished, practically offered me her first-born for changing the orientation of her life—primarily, it seemed, by assigning this book. However much I might have wanted the credit, I knew it wasn't mine, and I wondered whether these students were seeing something here that I, who had read the work a couple dozen times, had missed.

INSTEAD of writing a standard essay about it, one student wrote his own version of Book I, a catalogue of gratitude where Marcus enumerates the many people to whom he is indebted. Marcus thanks his grandfather, from whom he learned "courtesy and serenity of temper," and his father, who taught him "manliness without ostentation." On the list goes: teachers, kinsmen, friends. A man named Rusticus he thanks for encouraging him to be "accurate in my reading, and not content with a mere general idea of the meaning"; another teacher showed him "the need to make decisions for myself instead of depending on the hazards of chance"; a certain philosopher stood as his "model of self-control, fixity of purpose, and cheerfulness under ill-health or other misfortunes." And so on. The student's version had a similar tone, but for his admission in closing that this was the first time he had ever considered how many people he had to thank. The realization saddened him.

Class discussions usually work well—that is, serve an educative purpose—only if carefully guided; rap sessions tend to impede close thinking. But in this case allowing some leeway brought forth pointed observations. One happy casualty of our inquiry was that bugbear of all serious students of history: the issue of "relevance." It never came up, despite the common predisposition to suspect "old" books as "irrelevant" or, at best,

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marginal to modern times. As we progressed in the course, many began to see that such a judgment, even if valid for a particular work, can be made only after wide reading and years of sympathetic experience.

So what did we read? Here is a sampling of passages that have spurred especially strong reactions, in all cases Marcus's instructions to himself:

"Begin each day by telling yourself: Today I shall be meeting with interference, ingratitude, insolence, disloyalty, ill-will, and selfishness—all of them due to the offenders' ignorance of what is good or evil." This never fails to elicit remarks about drivers' etiquette.

"Do not waste what remains of your life in speculating about your neighbors, unless with a view to some mutual benefit."

"Put from you the belief that 'I have been wronged,' and with it will go the feeling. Reject your sense of injury, and the injury itself disappears." This puts assignment of blame for past misdeeds, public and private, legitimate and otherwise, in a new light.

"To refrain from imitation is the best revenge."

"If a man makes a slip, admonish him gently and show him his mistake. If you fail to convince him, blame yourself, or else blame nobody."

"Waste no more time arguing what a good man should be. Be one."

"And lest these admonitions appear too stringent: "Do not be distressed . . . if now and again practice falls short of precept."

Taken in small bits, these exhortations may sound like nuggets of dime-store wisdom. But the cumulative effect is more penetrating. With its confessional tone, the *Meditations* engaged my students with a personality, with the mind of someone who lived 1,800 years ago, an emperor who nonetheless had constantly to remind himself to live for what is right and good and to be diverted neither by fashion nor by mood. But also deeply embedded here is an implicit belief in personal responsibility and the power of the will. Discussions usually needed steering to prevent them from becoming therapy sessions, as even some of the quiet students related their epiphanies. One day a student abruptly remarked, "Now all that religion I got makes more sense," prompting alarmed stares from the smug and the bored. It wasn't a conversion. It was simply a reasoned recognition of what rules of behavior were designed to do.

Not all of the book reads so smoothly. Stoics believed suicide an allowable option for a life hopelessly off track. Words like "reason" and "nature" must be specifically defined by second-century Stoic understandings if the class is to avoid getting bogged down in archaic cosmologies. But attention to the varied meanings of words leads to greater care in formulating ideas themselves, a valuable habit. And after reading the *Meditations*, passions, base and noble alike, stand out in sharper relief, so that when we do turn to Homer, the relentless, destructive anger of Achilles and the high nobility of Hector take on an impelling significance; they signify something at least as real as the "real world" that is supposed to have the last word. As one young woman wrote in an essay, the world seemed "bigger" after reading the *Meditations*.

This is about all an instructor talking with a class two or three times a week can expect, but it is a thin vein of silver. The students still have to meet the next and everlasting challenge of taking this broad view and narrowing the focus to apply it both to the modern age and to themselves. For the duration of the term, though, some fresh and agile minds are confronting a few of the finer expressions of the human spirit. Some may wonder if they will be equal to the weight of what little they have learned. That's one way to measure intellectual progress. Plato they'll probably leave behind forever. But I'm told that at the end of term, when books for this course get returned to the bookstore for resale, the *Meditations* is often missing from the pile. □

Revenge of the Blob

RAMESH PONNURU

'WHEN I first heard about outcome-based education through my son's high school, I was excited," says Alan Klaus of North Kansas City. "Finally they were talking about setting some standards. But the more I learned about it, the more concerned I became . . . . OBE is just not what it seems to be." Appointed by the Missouri Board of Education to a citizens' oversight committee, Mr. Klaus eventually co-wrote a report blasting the reforms he had initially welcomed.

Mr. Klaus's experience is not unique. More than thirty states have dabbled with some form of outcome-based education, and parents around the country have discovered that, despite its name, OBE has little to do with raising academic standards. Instead, it replaces existing standards with vague, often psychotherapeutic goals. These new goals become the criteria for assessing students, teachers, and schools.

OBE can be seen as an attempt to divert the movement for tougher educational standards that became influential in the Eighties. Ronald Reagan's Department of Education, particularly under William Bennett, operated on the assumption that American education had become unresponsive to the market it served. Reaganites therefore proposed initiatives to increase the influence of parents and taxpayers on the schools: a nationwide information network to publicize the track records of schools; national standards to raise the achievement of American students; and school vouchers to let parents' preferences reshape education. These reforms were opposed every step of the way by what Bennett calls "the blob": the educational establishment, consisting of teachers' unions and state bureaucracies.

Outcome-based education is the blob's counter-attack against these Reaganite initiatives. OBE prevents parents and taxpayers from assessing

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the academic progress of their local schools; de-emphasizes achievement in traditional subject areas; and allocates more money to each of public education's constituencies. With the exception of vouchers, which OBE advocates reject unconditionally, the method of this counter-attack is to detach the mechanisms of the reform movement from its goals.

Opposition has grown as parents have caught on to this con. OBE is hotly debated in states as different as Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Kentucky, and Colorado. Criticism has forced officials in many states to revise their OBE plans or even to drop them altogether, as Virginia Governor Douglas Wilder did last year. Opponents of OBE are so passionate that they sometimes ignore important differences between OBE plans, portraying them all as part of a nationwide conspiracy. But the truth is that OBE means different things in different places. In some states and districts, OBE involves a radical transformation of state assessment systems, curricula, even grading options; in others, OBE amounts to little more than the announcement of platitudinous goals.

If OBE takes its rhetoric from the 1980s standards movement, its ideology derives from an eclectic rehash of learning theories from the Sixties and Seventies. OBE descends in particular from a variant of applied behaviorism called "mastery learning." Under mastery learning, students were to be tested and retested on a unit of instruction until everyone could pass; only then could the class advance to the next unit. In essence, students could receive two scores on a test: "mastery" and "not yet." (Phyllis Schlafly, whose Eagle Forum has been in the forefront of opposition to OBE, quips, "Perhaps this is what they mean by 'lifelong learning.'") Quick learners were to do "peer tutoring" to help the slower ones.

Like other egalitarian projects, mastery learning had perverse results. High achievers grew bored and frustrated; tests were dumbed down to speed up the slowest kids; and average students began to realize that they no longer had to study, since they could always repeat a test. "Incomplete" replaced "C" as the badge of mediocrity. When Chicago's elementary schools adopted mastery learning in the Seventies, the results drove parents to sue the school system for educational malpractice.

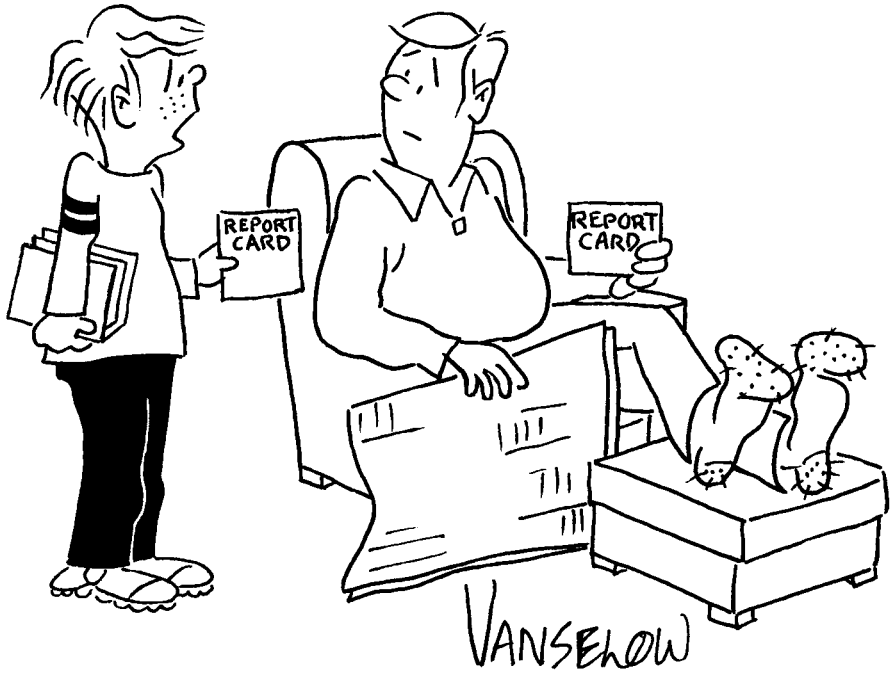
OBE and mastery learning share both a common philosophy and many of the same popularizers. Bill Spady, head of the pro-OBE High Success Network, admitted as much in a 1992 interview with *Educational Leadership* magazine: "In January of 1980 we convened a meeting of 42 people to form the Network for Outcome-Based Schools. Most of the people who were there . . . had a strong background in mastery learning, since it was what OBE was called at the time. But I pleaded with the group not to use the name 'mastery learning' in the network's new name because the word 'mastery' had already been destroyed through poor implementation."

Like mastery learning, OBE eschews the classification of students by ability or achievement. The National Center for Outcome-Based Education declares that "failure should be removed from our vocabulary and thoughts" and that "children should never have to compete for learning or for grades. For the most part, we believe competition in the classroom is destructive."

Also like mastery learning, OBE is not concerned with when children learn a subject. In Mr. Spady's favored formulation, schools should make "time into a variable instead of time being a constant." OBE supporters can sound tough-minded on this point: students, they say, should not get a diploma just for having attended school for 12 years. There is, however, another option: holding students responsible for learning subjects by a specific time. It seems unlikely that OBE advocates would like the implication of rejecting timetables: that policymakers should not care if the children of the ghetto learn long division at the same age their suburban peers master analytic geometry.

OBE theorists are also hostile to what they call "factoids." They want schools to focus more on "higher-order thinking skills," less on rote memorization of facts, figures, and formulae; they prefer "active learning" to "passive learning." Oklahoma's "learner outcomes," published in 1992, state: "The longstanding preoccupation with computation and emphasis on rote activities must change to a focus on fostering mathematical insight, reasoning, and problem-solving both individually and in collaborative groups."

In a country where only a quarter of eighth-graders in 1990 could identify Lincoln's main objective in the Civil War, the fear that schools are drilling too many facts into students' minds may seem eccentric. Indeed, the notion that rote memorization discourages analytical thinking underlay the disastrous "New Science" and "New Math" curricula of the late Sixties. It is hard to see how students can apply



". . . And here's one of yours I found in the attic."

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higher-order thinking skills to a base of knowledge they do not possess.

As the report that Mr. Klaus co-authored with John Ritland for the Missouri Board of Education notes, discovered knowledge is not more intrinsically valuable to students than revealed knowledge: "Civilization in the human sense depends on codified intergenerational teaching quite as much as on individual inquiry and discovery. Every person does not invent combustion."

Rote memorization teaches discipline: a child trying to learn his multiplication tables is also learning to concentrate on repetitive, non-stimulating tasks that are not necessarily fun. Furthermore, OBE's favored "active learning" situations (labs, field trips, etc.) have a significant disadvantage: they tend to reduce instruction time, and U.S. schools already spend less time on instruction than those of any other industrialized country.

OBE's disdain for specific knowledge leads its supporters to propose exceedingly vague "outcomes" as the basis for assessments. Minnesota's proposed graduation requirements, for instance, include the following outcomes: the student "applies informed decision-making processes to promote healthy lifestyles"; "understands the past and continuous development of societies and cultures in human history"; and "comprehends, interprets, and evaluates information received through reading, listening, and viewing."

Missouri's proposed standards have been designed to apply equally to all disciplines and age groups. But a first-grade English student and a twelfth-grade math student can meet the same standards only if the standards are highly abstract. And so they are: students will be expected to "make decisions that are informed, reasonable, and responsible"; to "work individually and with others to solve problems"; and to "plan effective verbal and nonverbal communications for a variety of purposes and audiences, anticipating the impact of the message." The state's previous assessment system had much more specific goals: tenth-graders, for example, were to "solve problems requiring the application of the Pythagorean theorem" and "to predict consequences in given situations where monopolies or oligopolies change supply to affect prices." The new OBE goals, in contrast, do not imply the mastery of a specific body of learning at a particular age.

It is unclear how the states can ensure that students have attained such amorphous "outcomes." Some critics fear that the subjectivity of many OBE goals opens the door to arbitrariness and abuse. Missouri's standards, for instance, require teachers to judge whether a student's personality helps a group to solve problems and whether he has accurately predicted the impact of his communications.

Other standards are clearly affective rather than academic: an Ohio high-school graduate is to "function as a responsible family member" and "maintain physical, emotional, and social well-being." Kentucky students are to "demonstrate positive strategies for achieving and maintaining mental and emotional balance." The Virginia Department of Education proposed that state schools enable students to play seven "life roles": "fulfilled individual," "supportive person," "lifelong learner," "expressive contributor," "quality worker," "informed citizen," and "environmental steward."

Seven school boards in California have voted against administering the state's new OBE-influenced assessment system because of concern that it measured affective rather than academic goals. One of the tests, for example, asked eighth-graders to describe the "ideas, questions, or opinions" elicited by an excerpt from Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and to "use symbols, images, drawings, and/or words to represent" events in the excerpt. Sue Stokka, a member of one of the dissenting school boards, charges that teachers under OBE would be practicing "mass therapy, and without a license. That's an infringement of parents' rights, not to mention the child's."

Other critics fear that the schools will impose liberal values on children. Mrs. Schlafly, for instance, objects to Oklahoma "health learner outcomes" such as, "the student will identify different types of family structures, so that no single type is seen as the only possible one" and, "the student will . . . [be] able to talk with one's actual or potential partner about sexual behavior." The environmentalist "outcomes" adopted by many states are especially troubling, given the limited ability of elementary-school students to handle complex ecological issues before mastering basic science.

Mr. Spady responds to such criticism by observing that schools have always inculcated values: "There is no way we are going to keep values out of the education process. Choosing a curriculum is a value process." Many OBE critics concede that as adult authority figures, teachers necessarily express judgments and convey values. But those judgments and values have never been the basis for student evaluations. Chester Finn, an assistant secretary of education under Reagan now at the Edison Project, notes that many parents want help from schools in teaching their children values—and that's fine, "as long as nobody has to attend the schools against their will." School choice is the only way to deal with such conflicts.

CONTROVERSIAL content aside, the very multiplicity of standards under OBE may undermine accountability. Missouri has a list of 41 proposed "standards"; Ohio has 24 "outcomes"; Kansas has ten "outcomes" and 21 "standards" measured by 53 "state indicators." (Imagine looking at a report card broken down into 95 categories, as one Colorado school's was.) The number and vagueness of standards make it impossible to compare schools in a district, districts in a state, or states in the nation—or even to track the progress of any of those units over time.

That may be the point. While educational theorists provide the intellectual justification for OBE, it owes its political force to state education bureaucracies and teachers' unions. Individual teachers often oppose it, both on principle and because of the added paperwork it entails. But the National Education Association is solidly behind OBE; and while Al Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers fears OBE will ultimately undermine support for public education, local AFT affiliates often appreciate the additional funding that OBE brings.

Whatever its ideological appeal, OBE clearly serves the interests of the education establishment. New assessment systems will change what goes on in the classrooms—as educational theorists often say, "tests drive curriculum"—but that may be incidental. OBE changes the terms of a debate

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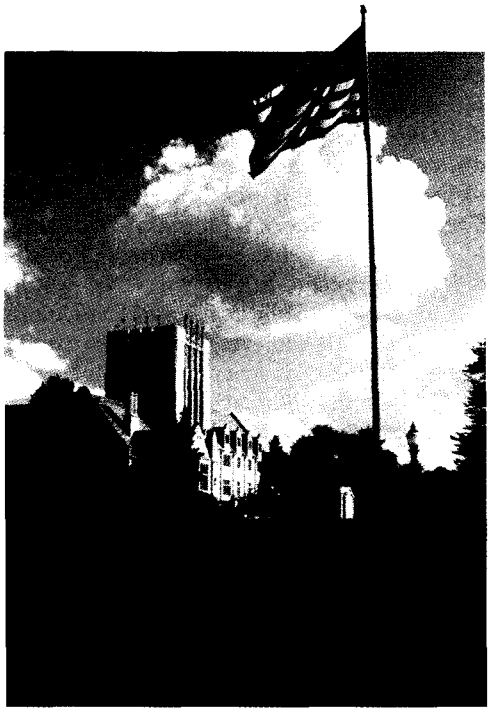

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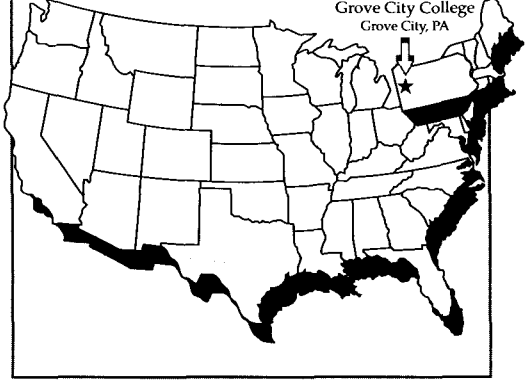

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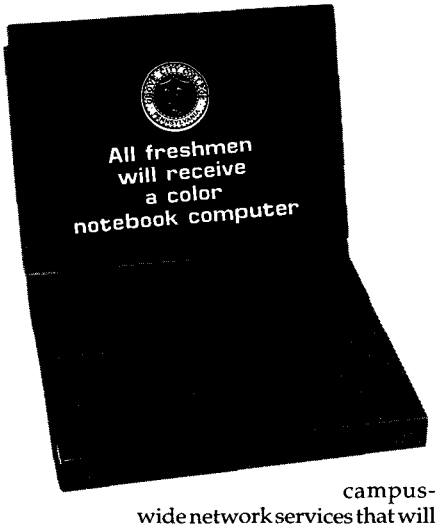

campus-wide network services that will permit remote access to information resources on campus, such as the library, as well as the growing array of information available worldwide through Internet and other communication resources. Each freshman is then provided a tool that will provide accessibility to computing and information technology.

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Information Technology Fee	$325† per semester

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the education establishment has been losing. For years, assessments have shown educational achievement declining or stagnating in tandem with massive spending increases. OBE allows the longstanding enemies of academic standards to co-opt the standards movement—indeed, to become its leaders.

Supporters of OBE have made much of the fact that resistance to OBE has come disproportionately from fundamentalist Christians. In September 1993 Matthew Freeman of People for the American Way told *Education Week*, "I wouldn't describe everyone opposing outcomes-based education as part of the religious right, but the national organizations taking it on are almost exclusively religious-right organizations." Carol Brzeczek, a member of the Littleton, Colorado, school board who voted with the majority to throw out the district's OBE-influenced graduation requirements, disputes the implication. During the election, she says, "people certainly made an effort to make it seem like we were all fundamentalists, but it wasn't true. They kept calling us stealth candidates, as if we had some hidden agenda, but we were just concerned about the schools and the way they were headed."

Mr. Freeman and Mrs. Brzeczek are both correct. Opposition to OBE cuts across religious and political lines, but it has fallen to the Christian Right to organize it. The Democrats have more or less ceded control of education policy to the NEA, and Republicans have punted on the issue. Parents who want sane education policies therefore have nowhere else to turn. OBE has thus become a useful recruiting device for the Christian Right. In Missouri, for instance, conservative Christians are forming groups all over the state, packing rooms with over 500 parents, a year before implementation of OBE.

As newcomers to politics, many OBE opponents have made missteps. Mr. Finn says, "I think that the people objecting to OBE are as wrong in many respects as the people coming up with these dippy outcomes." Some opponents focus on peripheral issues that generate paranoia (like the alleged dangers of a federal data base keeping track of all students' attitudinal "outcomes"). In addition, as Mr. Finn complains, some on the religious Right "are objecting to analytical reasoning, critical thinking, independent analysis—all the higher-level skills most of us think of as the purpose of education." But other OBE foes avoid those pitfalls. In California, for instance, Mrs. Stokka rejects OBE partly because it hinders the development of the skills that Mr. Finn emphasizes.

Mr. Finn worries that the backlash against OBE could endanger worthwhile reforms. In particular, he fears that OBE's "dippy outcomes" could discredit the idea of raising educational standards, in which case "we will find ourselves back in an era where education is evaluated by its spending levels and its class size and its inputs and its intentions rather than by what kids learn." As a practical matter, however, the ease with which the education establishment has hijacked the movement for higher standards may suggest that would-be reformers should push for decentralizing reforms, enlisting market forces rather than state bureaucracies to raise standards.

A more troubling feature of the resistance to OBE is that it partly reflects the fact that many parents (50 per cent of suburbanites, according to a 1993 Gallup poll) are satisfied with their kids' schools and do not want a shake-up—which makes any sweeping changes, including those conservatives favor, a hard sell. Yet this consideration underscores the importance of resisting OBE: it would deprive conservative reformers of the statistics they need to end that complacency. For the same reason full-blown OBE would make radical education reform more difficult to achieve, however, it would also make it more imperative. For years, the education establishment has said no to vouchers, arguing that public education should be improved instead. Now it is supporting efforts to deny parents and taxpayers the knowledge to do so.

The resistance to OBE surprised the education establishment, which is accustomed to dismissing grass-roots pressure. It has responded with more terminological evasion. Just as "mastery learning" became "outcome-based education," OBE has assumed a variety of new names, including "performance-based assessments." Writing in the May 1994 issue of *Science Teacher* magazine, John Kudlas advises his fellow OBE supporters to "refrain from calling your innovation 'OBE.' Use *results*, *objectives*, *goals*, *expectations*, or something similar. Using the term 'OBE' can attract unwanted criticism." □

Learning Opportunities

DAVID BOAZ

THE 1993 defeat for school choice in California seems to have spooked choice supporters and set them to thinking about alternative strategies. Only in Arkansas and Oregon were choice initiatives circulated in 1994, and both of those drives failed. Many activists have decided the voters aren't ready for choice, so it might be more effective to seek change through the legislative process or the courts.

For supporters of real choice, there are problems with both legislation and litigation. The biggest danger of school vouchers is that they will be used to regulate, control, and eventually destroy private schools. The experience with government aid to colleges, which are now subject to a plethora of rules and regulations, makes it hard to ignore that concern. The authors of California's Proposition 174, the most carefully crafted choice initiative yet, tried to avoid the problem by providing that no new regulation of private schools could be imposed without a three-fourths vote of the state legislature or, in the case of city or county regulation, a two-thirds vote of the relevant governmental body and a nearly unobtainable majority vote of the voters in that jurisdiction. It is impossible to imagine a state legislature

Mr. Boaz is executive vice president of the Cato Institute and editor of Liberating Schools: Education in the Inner City.

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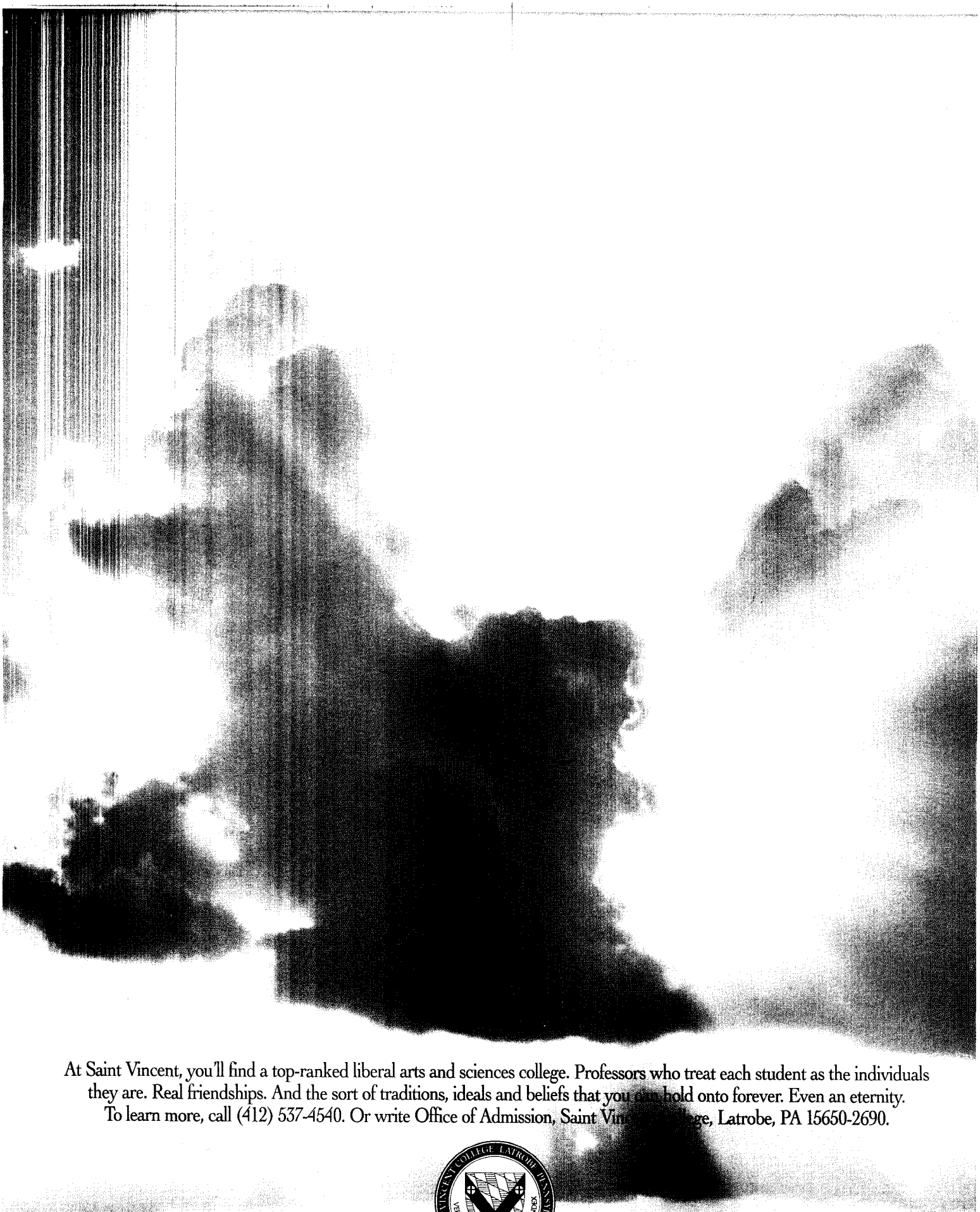

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building such protections—against itself—into choice legislation.

As for litigation, the Institute for Justice lawsuits against the Chicago and Los Angeles school systems, which argue that the promise of "equal educational opportunity" requires school vouchers, are a noble attempt to put public education on trial. But a victory—a court-ordered voucher plan—would surely constitute appalling overreaching by the courts—"right-wing Warrenism," in the words of former Bush administration speech writer Daniel McGroarty.

Choice advocates should not give up the initiative effort. Many past initiatives—notably Proposition 13, the Jarvis–Gann tax-cut proposal—failed many times before finally amassing a majority. And the campaigns to pass an initiative are an important way of educating the public about the voucher idea.

One lesson drawn by many choice advocates from the California experience was summed up by *The Econo-*

Forsaking the Initiative

ACCORDING to a Heritage Foundation survey, some form of school choice legislation was introduced or pending in 34 states during 1993, and at least 35 states now have grass-roots coalitions working for choice.

The Arizona legislature almost passed a statewide choice plan in 1994, and there's a good chance that choice will make a comeback in 1995, especially if Governor Fife Symington is re-elected and House Education Committee chair Lisa Graham is elected superintendent of public instruction. Unfortunately, the pilot plan proposed in 1994 would provide vouchers to only 8,000 Arizona children by the year 2000. A choice bill supported by several Democratic legislative leaders in Connecticut was defeated in the House on a tie vote in April and will probably not come up again this year.

In New Jersey, Governor Christine Todd Whitman is committed to legislation that would allow Mayor Bret Schundler to implement a voucher program in Jersey City, where the schools currently cost $9,200 per pupil each year. A poll taken in May showed that 62.5 per cent of New Jersey voters approve of letting Jersey City test a pilot program. Support among African Americans was 71.6 per cent. The New Jersey Education Association, however, has recently announced that it is imposing a $50 union dues surcharge on its members to raise $10 million to defeat Schundler's plan and other reform initiatives. In Wisconsin, state Representative Polly Williams and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, both Democrats, are backing legislation to open the voucher program that began in 1990 to all schools, not just nonsectarian schools. The 1994 legislative session has ended, so the voucher expansion will have to wait until 1995.

More modest reforms in the direction of choice are being implemented or at least debated throughout the states. The private firm Education Alternatives, Inc., is running nine Baltimore schools under contract. Chris Whittle's Edison Project has won a contract to run three charter schools in Massachusetts beginning in 1995. The idea of charter schools—autonomous public institutions freed of most regulations—is popular in many states, partly as a way to relieve pressure for choice. But by the time the lobbyists and insiders get through with a charter school bill, there usually is not much room for innovation left.

Minnesota, the state that launched the public-school choice movement, is operating a grand total of six charter schools this year. In Michigan, where a game of chicken between the Democratic legislature and Republican Governor John Engler led to a total restructuring of educational finance, the outcome was an increase in the sales tax and a disappointing charter-school provision that limits sponsoring agencies to public-school boards and state universities and requires charter schools to employ state-certified teachers. Massachusetts allows only 25 charter schools, which may not enroll more than 0.75 per cent of the state's students, but Republican Governor William F. Weld is trying to lift both caps.

In the vast educational wasteland of Washington, D.C., School Superintendent Franklin L. Smith recently tried to contract out the operation of 15 low-performing schools to a private company but was stymied by a reactionary school board. Smith vowed to press the fight again next year; in the meantime, the *Washington Post* reported, "Smith, anxious to graduate more students who can read, plans to hire a private firm to provide eleventh-hour tutoring to as many as 600 District high school juniors and seniors who on average read at the fourth-grade level."

Some choice supporters, taking a leaf from the Left, have asked the courts to give them what the voters won't. The Institute for Justice filed suit on behalf of low-income parents in both Chicago and Los Angeles, arguing that the state's promise of "equal educational opportunity" can be fulfilled only by giving its clients a voucher to pay for their own high-quality education. Institute lawyer Clint Bolick has also been in court defending legislative voucher programs in Milwaukee and Puerto Rico.

In Georgia a case filed in June seeks to implement a 1961 law that offered a voucher to families eager to flee newly integrated public schools. Ignored for 30 years, the law was rediscovered recently and may ironically be used to let inner-city minority children escape the schools their parents fought to enter. The 1961 law was supported by state Representative Zell Miller, who now burnishes his liberal credentials as governor by opposing vouchers for poor kids. And in Milwaukee, while Williams and Norquist pursue a legislative strategy, Landmark Legal Foundation attorney Mark Bredemeier is suing on behalf of parents who want to use the current voucher to attend religious schools. Bredemeier argues that granting a voucher only for secular schools restricts the parents' free exercise of religion.

—DAVID BOAZ

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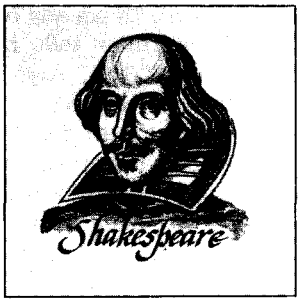

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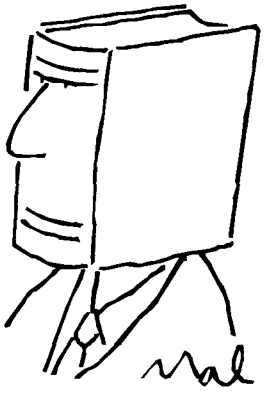
mist: "Proposition 174 might well have passed if it had simply contained provisions requiring schools that received voucher money to meet some basic standards set by the authorities." Such provisions would make a choice plan a Trojan horse, concealing a regulatory monster inside an education plan. And the initiative probably still would have failed if it had included such provisions, given the lack of genuine public understanding and the massive spending by opponents of choice. Not only did the California Teachers Association and its allies spend some $16 million to defeat Proposition 174, but the anti-174 spots were virtually the only political ads on television in a special off-year election. The ads would not have had such an impact had they been swallowed up by commercials for gubernatorial, senatorial, congressional, and legislative candidates (as they would be in 1994 or 1996).



The best approach for choice advocates now is to try to place initiatives on as many state ballots as possible in 1996 (23 states allow voter initiatives). Such initiatives are part of the process of developing public support, and a large number of initiatives would force the opponents of choice to spread their resources thin. Remember, those who man the Berlin Wall keeping students inside the state monopoly system must defeat choice everywhere. Those seeking to liberate children and families need only one victory to show the rest of the country the superiority of markets over monopoly.

Choice advocates need to gain a broader base of support as they work to qualify initiatives for the ballot. Previous initiatives have generally been developed by small groups of conservative or libertarian ideologues. Those groups must bring in the support of business, minority voters, elected officials (in California the opposition of the Republican governor was an obvious failure of the choice campaign), and suburban voters.

It will not be easy to find a specific choice proposal that appeals to all those groups. Thus choice advocates should adopt a conscious strategy of designing different proposals for the ballots of different states. Along with expanded polling and focus-group efforts, that will help us determine just what kind of plan can garner majority support. The objections that have been raised in previous choice campaigns can be answered in various ways.

Suburban voters are not persuaded that their school systems need shaking up. They do—those schools are good only compared with other monopoly American systems—but that realization can wait for another day. Meanwhile, suburbanites fear that the schools they have struggled to pay for with big mortgages and high property taxes will be destroyed by an influx of poorly educated, undisciplined students from inner cities. Few people articulate this concern; a notable exception is syndicated columnist Samuel Francis of the *Washington Times*, who put the argument in its sharpest form: "Maybe the suburbanites know that once 'choice' passes into law, the private suburban schools they've worked hard to choose won't be worth choosing as minorities move in." Some will suspect racism here. But it is understandable that suburbanites would object to bureaucrats in a distant state capital forcing them to accept an infusion of disruptive students, whatever their race, in their schools.

The solution is simple: allow school districts to exempt themselves from receiving out-of-district students. The analogy would be to emigration and immigration. International public opinion roundly condemns countries that prevent their citizens from leaving but grants much more leeway with regard to immigration policy. Similarly, a choice plan should insist that districts allow unsatisfied families to "emigrate," using the voucher to attend different schools, but it could let districts set their own immigration policies. Private schools would still provide plenty of options for dissatisfied students.

A stronger safeguard would be to limit vouchers to private schools. Each student could attend her local public school or take the voucher and attend any private school of her choice—but there would be no public-school choice beyond what districts might adopt internally.

Some choice supporters, such as John Coons of the University of California at Berkeley Law School, refused to support Proposition 174 because it provided for a voucher (which it called a scholarship) of only about $2,600, more than the average cost of private school but in Coons's opinion insufficient to allow the most educationally deprived students to find a suitable private education. A state choice group might propose a full-value voucher, worth whatever the state currently spends on a child in public school. (The national average is about $6,000.) This would mean no cost savings from vouchers, but it might attract support from liberal and minority voters.

On the other hand, the false claim that vouchers would cost the taxpayers money has been used effectively against choice initiatives, which failed in both Colorado (in 1992) and California while fiscal conservatism prevailed in other initiatives. Teachers' unions and their allies make pro-taxpayer arguments with a straight face and to great effect. They claim that vouchers will cost the taxpayers money because the 10 percent of students now enrolled in private schools will get them immediately. That's true, but if the voucher amount is about half what the state spends on public school students and if at least 10 percent of the students leave the public schools, then the taxpayers are ahead of the game. Since it's difficult to get that message across, advocates might propose an initiative that would apply only to first-graders in the first year, adding a grade each year. That way no current private-school students would be eligible, and it would be easier to explain how low the cost of choice would be.

ANOTHER WAY to hold down the cost would be to provide means-tested vouchers. A state might offer a full voucher for students from families below the poverty level, phasing it out as family income rose toward the median income, or even up to 200 percent of the median. This proposal is appealing in several ways: it would cost less; it would appeal to liberals who want to help poor and minority students with-

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out subsidizing middle-class families; and it would suggest that paying for a good education is the responsibility of families unless they can't afford it.

A RELATED PROPOSAL would be a voucher plan that applied only in large cities, similar to the Milwaukee plan, passed by the Wisconsin legislature but available only to a small number of low-income Milwaukee families. An expanded version of that plan might offer vouchers only to the students in Detroit, say, or Chicago (though preferably to all of them in that jurisdiction) and might make the vouchers usable only in that city's private schools. Or the plan could apply to any district in which the median test score was below the 25th percentile for the state. Liberals would like the focus on the neediest children, and suburbanites could do something to help inner-city children without fearing the impact on their own schools. Such a proposal might well have the best chance of passing, and it would address our most serious educational problem, the disastrous schools in the inner city that trap our poorest children.

Here's a twist on the one-city plan that would surely be hard even for the teachers' unions to oppose: offer a voucher to any child who is assigned to a school that had more than one weapon incident during the previous school year. At least, supporters could say, we should allow children to escape from schools that are physically dangerous. (Maybe the voucher would be suspended after three weapon-free years at the school.)

Finally, an oldie but goodie for those worried about government encroachment on private schools: instead of a voucher, offer a tax credit. Any family that spends money on tuition could subtract that money from its income or property taxes. The credit could be made available to childless individuals and businesses, who in turn could use it to help low-income children. That would make it quite clear that the private schools are not receiving government money, only parents' money, and they should not be subject to government regulation.

I have my own preferences among these plans; some would work better than others to extend educational opportunity to more children and enlist the benefits of free-market competition in our educational system. But all of them would guarantee more opportunity and more quality than the current monopoly. Choice supporters should adopt the strategy of "two, three, many initiatives" until our children are liberated from the failing state monopoly. □

Handicapping Education

THOMAS J. MURPHY

RACHEL, a mentally retarded, speech-impaired 9-year-old with an IQ of 44 and a mental age of 4, sits in a California classroom, obliviously staring at a textbook that is upside-down in front of her. Across the country in New Jersey, Rafael, a mentally retarded 5-year-old with an IQ of 59 and a mental age of 2 who cannot speak intelligibly and who must be taken to the bathroom every 15 minutes, creates havoc with frequent outbursts, tantrums, and assaults on teachers, aides, and other students.

These scenes are the result of a movement called "full inclusion," whose supporters declare that putting children like Rachel and Rafael into separate classes is a form of illegal discrimination. Proponents argue that full inclusion is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which says disabled children should be educated with nondisabled children "to the maximum extent appropriate." Yet IDEA also requires that public schools provide highly specialized education "designed to meet the unique needs" of handicapped children. That is precisely what full inclusion fails to do.

Backed by ideologues in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, full inclusion is the latest egalitarian fad to be imposed upon the nation's schools. The purpose is to eliminate the separate education of nearly all handicapped children and force them into regular classrooms, ignoring the objections of their parents and the recommendations of professional educators. In short, it represents a triumph of liberal ideology over education under the guise of civil rights.

In its most mindless form, full inclusion puts mentally retarded, speech-impaired, non-toilet-trained, extremely disruptive children with disparate needs in regular public-school classes. These children are supposed to pursue individualized curricula with aides, under the aegis of the teacher who is attempting to teach the whole class. To accomplish this formidable task, the teacher would be expected to bone up on special education and rely on an array of consultants.

In practice, the handicapped children would be denied the small-group, multi-sensory, carefully sequenced instruction, integrated with their various physical therapies, now provided by skilled certified teachers. The non-handicapped children would be denied *their* regular instruction and, to a greater or lesser extent, see their classes converted into special-education classes. This is an educational nightmare in which all the children emerge as losers.

"It gets complex when you have kids with a broad range of abilities," Mary Crampton, a teacher in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, recently told the *Wall Street Journal*. Miss Crampton had taught a seventh-grade social-studies class that included eight low-IQ children and a deaf child with cerebral palsy as well as several gifted students. She described the class as "a three-ring circus."

The American Federation of Teachers was so alarmed at the concept of full inclusion that it called for a moratorium on the practice in a December 1993 statement. "It's not just teachers who are paying the price," the AFT warned. "Inappropriate inclusion lowers expectations that any student in that classroom can get the education they deserve, and the student who needs the most help invariably suffers

Mr. Murphy, an attorney in Marlton, New Jersey, represented the school board in the Oberti *case.*

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the most. As inclusion is increasingly practiced, it bears no resemblance to what most well-wishing people think of as mainstreaming children with disabilities into regular classrooms. It places children who cannot function into an environment which doesn't help them and often detracts from the education process for all students."

The policy presumes that handicapped children benefit by being placed with non-handicapped children. There is no scientific basis for this belief. Indeed, experience shows that such children are more isolated in the regular class, which imposes greater psychological pressure on them, resulting in behavior problems. Advocates of full inclusion respond to requests for substantiation of their claims by accusing critics of lacking sympathy for handicapped children.

Despite the dearth of evidence that full inclusion works, the policy has been endorsed by two federal appeals courts. In the 1993 case *Oberti* v. *Clementon Board of Education*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled that the school district had violated IDEA by placing Rafael Oberti in a separate special-education class. The court decided that Rafael could be satisfactorily educated in a regular classroom, despite his inability to communicate, his disruptive behavior, and his need for frequent trips to the bathroom. In the 1994 case *Holland* v. *Unified School District of Sacramento*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled that Rachel Holland, staring at her upside-down textbook, was a fully participating member of the class.

Cases of this sort were anticipated by the U.S. Supreme Court as early as 1982. In *Hendrick Hudson Central School District* v. *Rowley*, Chief Justice William Rehnquist specifically warned against judicial interference with the formulation of educational methodology under IDEA: "Courts must be careful to avoid imposing their view of preferable educational methods upon the States. The primary responsibility for formulating the education to be accorded to a handicapped child, and for choosing the educational method most suitable to the child's needs, was left by the Act to State and local educational agencies."

The good news is that the cases decided in favor of full inclusion are law in only 2 of the nation's 11 federal cir-

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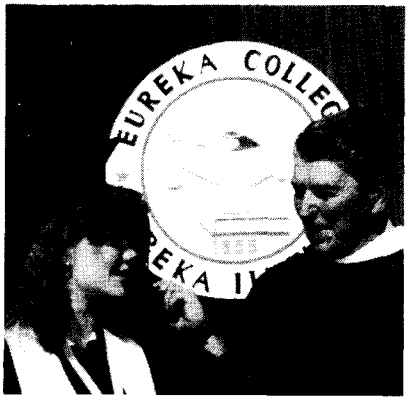

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cuits, and there is contrary case law in other circuits. The bad news is that the administrative bureaucracy that controls public schools in this country, striving to comply with guidelines from the Education Department's Office of Civil Rights and avoid lawsuits, sees these cases as the wave of the future. Whittier High School in Whittier, California, recently adopted a plan to integrate all children into regular classes, regardless of disability. Fred Zimmerman, Whittier's principal, told the *Wall Street Journal*, "With recent court cases, this will be the direction of all schools."

Suppose you are the parent of a non-handicapped child forced to attend quasi-special-education classes. Or suppose you are the parent of a handicapped child and want the special education to which your child is entitled by law. What recourse do you have? Congress can't help you, because there is nothing wrong with the law; it has simply been misinterpreted. Federal judges are not subject to the electoral process. The Supreme Court can't review *Oberti* because the school district did not appeal; it may review *Holland*, but that case does not present all the relevant issues. The Office of Civil Rights has the immunity of an entrenched federal bureaucracy.

It may take parents some time to learn what is happening to their public schools and that they are powerless to do anything about it. Once they wake up, they may choose to wait through a few years of chaos until the same federal courts tell them that the decision in *Oberti* was a mistake, that parallel instruction and full inclusion really are not mandated.

On the other hand, with the havoc of full inclusion added to gross inefficiency, court-ordered secularization, and the conversion of schools into laboratories for social experimentation, these parents may finally give up on public education and join the growing number of Americans who support school vouchers.

As the exodus from public schools continues, the public-school system could be downsized to accommodate the children of the liberals who support full inclusion—unless, of course, they are already sending their kids to

A Different Sort of Handicap

PUTTING incontinent nine-year-olds into regular third-grade classes is a minor disruption for students in a standard curriculum compared to the irrevocable damage suffered by millions of normal children with average intelligence who have been placed in special education programs because their regular reading instructors could not teach them to read.

In 1975 Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to provide specially trained teachers with high-priced helpers, including psychologists and physical therapists, for children with disabilities such as impaired sight or hearing, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and mental retardation. No one expected these highly trained instructors to teach any but students with disabilities that are real obstacles to learning. Proponents and opponents of the bill alike would be surprised to learn that 4 million of the 5 million public-school special education students have no mental or physical handicaps.

About 2.5 million of these students are in the "learning disabled" category. By definition these are students with average or above-average IQs who—for some reason—cannot read. Another million are in the "language disorder" group. These kids stutter, lisp, and have other pronunciation difficulties that are rarely associated with physical defects. About half a million are in the "emotionally disturbed" classification. Most of these are older students who have short attention spans—possibly because they have never learned to read. Together, these three groups include some 4 million students with no mental or physical handicap who should have learned to read, write, and figure in regular classes.

Though the number of students in public schools has shrunk by several million since the crowded Baby Boomer years of the Sixties and Seventies, the special education enrollment has climbed by 30 per cent (from 3.7 million to 5 million). And the enrollment in the "learning disabled" category has almost tripled. Last year 11 million of the nation's 42 million public-school students participated in special education programs or in the program set up under Chapter I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (intended to help the "disadvantaged").

This is a very expensive proposition. Federally mandated special education programs for about 1 million truly disabled students and 4 million teaching failures cost over $25 billion in the 1991–92 school year. Most of it was disbursed in salaries for 600,000 special education employees. The total expense for special education since 1976–77 (the first year it was in its present form) is over $200 billion, a figure few have noticed because state and local school districts have paid 92 per cent of it.

In Oklahoma, the state I know best, the average per-pupil cost in 1992–93 for regular students was $2,700; for students in special education classes, the cost was $8,600. Because the average cost for special education students was more than three times the average cost for regular students, and the average cost for Chapter I students was $1,300 more than the average cost for regular students, Oklahoma spent more than 42 per cent of its $2 billion education budget on the 22 per cent enrolled in Chapter I and special education. Oklahoma spent $150 million more on two programs that produce most of its illiterate graduates and drop-outs than it spent teaching math, science, history, geography, and English to all of its 588,000 students.

Annual reports to Congress on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act show that almost 7 out of 10 special education students drop out, "age out" (upon reaching their 22nd birthday), are expelled, or leave school with unearned diplomas. Perhaps 1 or 2 out of 10 complete a standard high-school curriculum of

(Continues on page 60)

Mrs. Wood is a research consultant for the National Right to Read Foundation.

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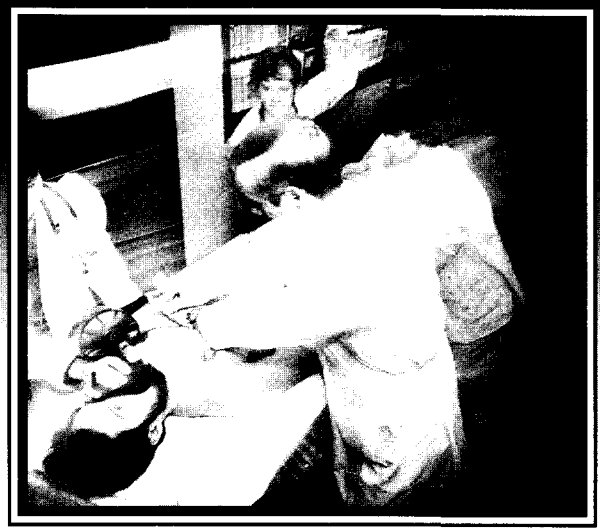
IF YOU THINK HEALTH CARE IS EXPENSIVE NOW...



Those advocating the proposed national health care plan would have us believe that it will provide better medical treatment across the country. All Americans will be able to receive the optimum treatment, they claim. But here's what they're not telling us:

Over 87% of America *does* receive the optimum treatment now. If passed, this "national program" designed to cover the 13% of Americans without any policies will actually *reduce* the quality of health care we enjoy today and *increase* the cost we currently pay. As P.J. O'Rourke phrased it, "If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free."

And have we ever paused to consider that this "national health care program" is just a cover name for socialized medicine? As Americans, we know too well the plague of countries that practice socialized medicine. We see those visitors suffering various diseases come to America to receive health treatment. Why? Because in America, we enjoy the highest level of medical technology in the world. And our doctors, nurses and health care professionals are free to treat the patient, not place the person on a waiting list.

The prescription for a healthy nation is to maintain and improve our medical technology. Else, if the proposed national program is approved, we might as well just take a number.

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Teaching the Moral Sciences

HADLEY ARKES

"LET US first get clear," I said, "that we are in the right place. This is Political Science 23: Political Obligations." A young man in the back of the room raised his hand instantly and challenged me: "What do you mean by that?" For the next seven minutes it was virtually hand-to-hand combat, and as far as I could see, nothing of substance had been placed yet on the table. The young man who asked the question never returned for the second day. But the word filtered back to me across the campus: someone had told this fellow that if he conceded even the very first thing I said, he would never be able to work his way out of the argument.

And that is perhaps why the air was crackling with anticipation even in the first moments of the class. The central problem of the course was the nexus between morality and law. The root of law and obligation is the Latin, "ligare," to bind. The law displaces personal choice with a binding commitment, or a public obligation. The law may forbid us to discriminate on the basis of race in a private business, or it may restrain us from aborting children in the womb. In these instances, the law may commit people to things they find morally repugnant. To ask how that state of affairs can be justified is to raise again the question of whether there really are moral truths, or moral propositions in the strictest sense: propositions about the things that are universally right or wrong, just or unjust, for others as well as oneself. Only if there are propositions of that kind could we ever be justified in displacing, or overriding, personal choice in favor of a uniform, public rule. For in that event, we may be asked, rightly, to forgo our personal preference out of a respect for things that are in principle right or wrong. Once we become aware, for example, that it is truly "wrong" for parents to torture their infants, it becomes comically out of place to conclude that "therefore we ought to give them tax incentives in order to induce them to stop." When we come to understand the things that are in principle wrong, it becomes radically inapt to assert our "freedom of choice."

I used to tell the students, on the opening day, that we spend so much time in the colleges lingering with the things that are problematic and uncertain that it was worth taking at least one course to remind ourselves of those things in the domain of morality and law which we not only know but which cannot be otherwise. The reception accorded to William Bennett's *Book of Virtues* may show the persisting hunger in the public for some older understandings about the teaching of right and wrong, before nihilism and cultural relativism began to touch

Mr. Arkes, an NR *contributing editor, is the Edward Ney Professor of Jurisprudence at Amherst College. His course on political obligations is recapitulated in his book* First Things, *(Princeton University Press, 1986).*

WOOD

(Continued from page 58)

any kind. And contrary to notions that most Chapter I and special education pupils are in the early grades, rolls show that nearly half are in grades 6 through 12.

Somehow it never occurs to public-school administrators that the problem may be in the method of teaching rather than the children. In particular, the switch from phonics to the "see and say" technique of reading instruction has crippled public-school education. In 1929 and 1930, hundreds of primary teachers, guided by college reading professors, stopped teaching beginners to read by matching sounds with letters and started teaching them to recognize the 1,500 most commonly used words simply by seeing them printed over and over in the new "see and say" readers. The method was never tested in the classroom, and its adoption by the vast majority of public schools has coincided with dramatic declines in literacy and academic achievement.

RECENT neurological research confirms that everyone reads—if he reads—by matching spoken sounds with letters that spell sounds (as in phonics), not by matching the general shape of words or sentences with meanings. The children who have learned to read in whole-word or whole-language classes have done so in spite of that instruction—not because of it. Handicapped by a wrongheaded approach to teaching, many have not learned to read. Placing such children in special education classes allows the school system to hide its teaching failures.

States should eliminate special education for all but the truly handicapped—those with physical or mental disabilities that are real obstacles to learning. This will reduce the number of special education students from the current 5 million to about 1 million. School districts can use some of the money saved in this way to provide compensatory programs for children from homes with illiterate or barely literate parents *after* those children have learned to read. Schools can also use the money to retrain all of the 100,000 Chapter I teachers and their 100,000 helpers, along with most of the 300,000 special education teachers and their 300,000 helpers. Maybe they could be core-subject teachers. We haven't needed those because half of our students don't read well enough to do lessons in math, science, history, government, and literature.

—REGNA LEE WOOD

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everything around us. But what I can report from the battle lines of the campus is that the news, for all students, is not exhilirating.

THE STUDENTS, of course, arrive at college confirmed in the secular religion of cultural relativism. With this state of mind, some of them seem positively depressed to discover that there really are moral truths, and they show no hesitation to blame the messenger for bearing the news. But a handful of others seem to discover a certain serenity in knowing—as one of my students put it years ago—that they may have access to a moral understanding that does not simply depend on the opinions of their friends.

The course on political obligations would pose the question again of how we could know, in morals, of certain apodictic or "necessary truths," and we would put that question to ourselves through the classic debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. When the Founders said "all men are created equal," did they really mean "all men," black as well as white? Did they truly articulate, as Lincoln said, an abstract moral truth, applicable to all men and all times? Or did they mean, as Douglas argued, that only white men were equal to one another, and did they really believe, with Douglas, that judgments about right and wrong were always "relative" to the culture in which they were held?

It was Lincoln's understanding that the rights mentioned in the Declaration of Independence had a "natural" foundation in the things that separated human beings from other animals. The right of human beings to be governed only with their own consent was a right that arose distinctly for beings who could give and understand reasons. And therefore those rights would remain the same in all places where human nature remained the same and men were still distinguishable from animals. Even in this age of animal rights, no one has suggested that horses or dolphins should share the vote (except perhaps in Massachusetts). That is what the Founders meant when they referred to "all men are created equal" as a "self-evident" moral truth—not evident to every self who happened down the street, but self-evident in the sense of axiomatic or true *per set nota*, true in the nature of things. This understanding of the Founders was set down with a remarkable precision by Alexander Hamilton in the opening to the *Federalist #31*: "In disquisitions of every kind," he wrote, "there are certain primary truths, or first principles, upon which all subsequent reasonings must depend. These contain an internal evidence which, antecedent to all reflection or combination, command the assent of the mind."

It is persistently sobering for the students to discover that they are aligned with Douglas and not Lincoln. In that stance, they are joined by modern liberals, by most of their professors, and by the radical feminists. The Left on the campuses stand now as adversaries of Lincoln and the American Founders, for they deride the notion of moral truths or "natural rights." Indeed, it has become the fashion now to deny that there is any such thing as human "nature." As the argument runs, the doctrine of natural rights is merely an "ideology" to preserve patriarchy and the subordination of women. In this view, what we take to be human is "socially con-

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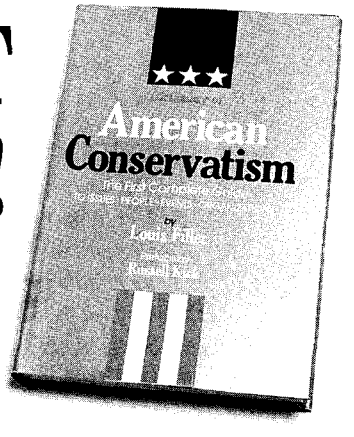

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structed" or constituted from one place to another, according to the vagaries of the local culture. And yet, the telling reflex among the feminists and the Left is to cast moral judgments, across the cultures, on regimes in other places. They think they can identify the rights and wrongs done to women even in the most exotic countries; in fact, they even presume that they can identify "women" in all places. And so, in the curious world of the campus Left, there are "human rights" to be vindicated in all places, but strictly speaking there are no "humans." And since there are no moral truths, there are no "rights" that are truly rightful.

From the question of Lincoln and Douglas, we are drawn back to the grounds on which we may know of moral truths. We are drawn back, that is, to the teachings of Aristotle and Plato, to Kant and Thomas Reid. And from there the argument unfolds in a train of cases: judging regimes in other places; wars and interventions; the war in Vietnam; the claims of conscientious objection; the obligation to rescue; the claims of "privacy"; and then, finally, the course reaches its culmination in the problem of abortion.

But as the students come to understand almost instantly, the question of abortion is there from the first moments, when we are dealing with Lincoln and Douglas. They have heard—and they quickly come to grasp—that all of the implications that will be exploding upon them later really spring from the principles that were established earlier in the course. But to avert the conclusions they find so deeply uncongenial, about abortion or Vietnam, they would have to strike at Lincoln. They would have to persuade themselves that there was no compelling ground for the rights that Lincoln was seeking to vindicate, and for the things that they, too, would wish to be true. And as they come to a judgment in this way about the ground of Lincoln's argument, they must of course come to a decision about the grounds of their own judgments. That is why the students come to understand that the course is about them. I recall for them Kant's remark: that when we offer our respect to any person, we really offer our reverence for that law of which he is an example. The mission, for the course, is to bring students to that condition in which they can finally give an account of the principled grounds of their judgments and motivations—the law of which they would purport to be examples. That is why this is the course in which students break down into tears. A course that seriously puts the question to them about the grounds of their own judgment cuts deeply. And that is why the professor must learn, over the years, to be disarming, and to soften some of the blows.

But the question must be put, demandingly, even if it induces discomfort. As Dr. Johnson wrote in his essay on John Milton, "the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences . . . are not the great or frequent business of the human mind. . . . [T]he first requisite is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong. . . . Prudence and justice are virtues and excellences of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance." Not everyone may be up to the task, but no one can escape the need to make judgments about the ways of life that are better and worse. And so, to adapt a line from Woody Allen, there is no question that there is a moral world: The only question is, How far is it from midtown, and how late does it stay open? □

"And to think, the student body voted against *uniforms."*

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The Road to Cairo

THE POPULATION PROBLEM

The Pope undermines the case against population control by accepting leftist economic assumptions.

WILLIAM McGURN

IT'S NOT OFTEN that a Pope achieves consensus, but John Paul II has managed to do it on the issue of population. Not within his Church, mind you—even Popes don't expect that kind of miracle. But within the reigning Kultur there is nearly universal agreement: if the nations of the world are to ratify an ambitious plan to redefine norms of family and sexuality, and commit their governments to ambitious spending programs to back it up, this Pope has to be dealt with. The plan is the draft program of action for the UN-sponsored International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in mid September, and by calling into question some of its provisions John Paul threatens to spoil what was supposed to be one large party.

In so doing he has concentrated on his person the full wrath of everyone from the prestige press and the Green movement to the UN and the Clinton Administration. Of those who have taken issue with the Pope in their columns and editorials (and you can count his defenders on one hand), virtually all have taken the ad hominem route, portraying him as an old fuddy-duddy who simply cannot deal with the reality of sex. Even the highbrow *Economist* found room for an editorial called "Condom conundrums" arguing that behind the Pope's teaching was the truth that "sex, in the eyes of the Vatican's rump of greybeards and nit-pickers, is still the great monster that must be kept beyond the gate." Only slightly more elevated, the *Washington Post*'s Hobart Rowan opined that "with the passing of the Soviet empire, the church has lost the 'glue' of opposition to Communism upon which it relied to unite the faithful" and is thus in the market for a new devil.

Here in Hong Kong the *Eastern Express* picked up a *Guardian* story under the headline "Pope teams up with Iran hardliners." And no Inquisition would be complete without the ritual denunciations from the media's house Catholics. When former abortion-clinic owner Frances Kissling of Catholics for Free Choice held a press conference to explain that the Pope did not represent Catholics, it was deemed worthy of coverage ("Vatican Out of Step on Birth Control, Group Finds"). An umbrella group called Catholics Speak Out received reams of coverage simply by *planning* to take out a full-page ad in the *New York Times*. According to the text of the proposed advertisement, the Pope's teaching is "a marginal minority view in our church, defended largely by a male celibate hierarchy."

But top prize belongs to the *Christian Science Monitor*. Like the others it has dutifully reported the Pope's obstinacy and respectfully quoted all the usual suspects. But it also ran a photo whose caption says it all: "A Filipino family poses inside their home in a Manila slum. In the Philippines and elsewhere, the Roman Catholic Church has criticized efforts to promote birth control." Get it? The Pope is keeping people poor.

A Question of Morality?

TO MOST of these people the Pope's positions are literally unintelligible, a combination of Roman mummery and Victorian prudishness. There is no small irony in these public treatments, for they demonstrate that in less than half a century the Catholic Church in America has gone from Maria Monk and the Whore of Babylon to the Church of Impossibly Strict Standards, a change that probably tells us more about society than it does about the Church's relative position in it. Even those who have not been radicalized, some of whom might even have some admiration for the Pope, tend to see his attacks on Cairo as stemming from a theological opposition to homosexuality, birth control, and, of course, abortion. They have it wrong. It is not the Pope's objection to birth control or abortion that is driving his attacks on Cairo but rather the long-standing orthodox Christian view of life and sexuality and their relation to a healthy society that is driving his views on homosexuality, birth control, and abortion. In short it is a collision of irreconcilable world views, a collision the Pope appears destined to lose, at least in the City of Man. It is a testament to this Pope's dedication to his role as pastor that he has evidently decided that losing well and clearly

Mr. McGurn is senior editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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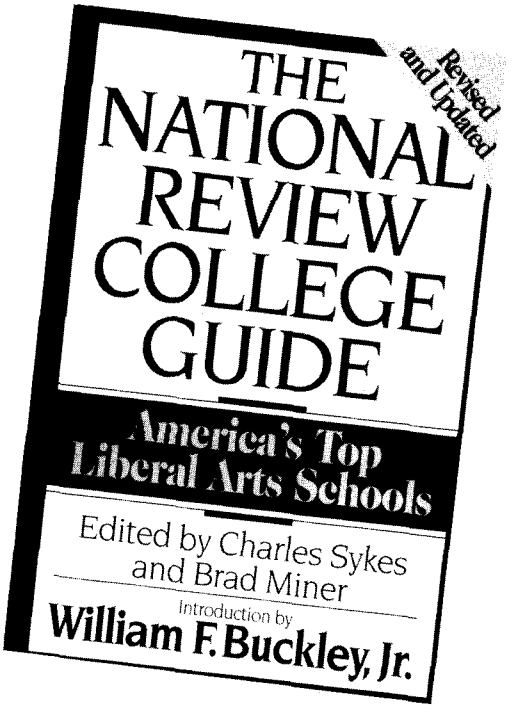

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may be the best service he can render a world unwilling to acknowledge the truths he has to tell it.

There is little new in what the Pope is saying. What has brought the controversy to a head is the meeting in Cairo, the third such conference since 1974. There delegations from 170 countries will consider a draft program intended to do for population what the Earth Summit did for the environment: ratify a large list of freshly discovered "rights," a government-sponsored plan of action to implement them, and, naturally, commitments of billions of dollars from the world's taxpayers to pay for it all.

Battle Lines Drawn

JOHN PAUL fully understands what is at stake here. So do his opponents. The global push for population control began at the first UN conference on the issue in Bucharest in 1974, a time when statements like the first sentence in Paul Ehrlich's best-selling book *The Population Bomb*—"The battle to feed all humanity is over"—were still taken seriously. At the second conference, ten years later in Mexico City, it was another story. The Reagan Administration got the conference to agree that abortion should not be promoted as a means of family planning and that population growth itself was a "neutral" factor in economic development. This was followed by the cut-off of U.S. taxpayer dollars to groups like the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) because of their support for programs, like China's, that were characterized by forced abortions and sterilizations.

This time around the population-control enthusiasts are much better prepared, and with a friendly Administration in the White House they smell victory. Rather than take the issue head on, they have wisely opted to get what they want by co-opting language on the family and shifting the focus of the debate to "choice" and "women's empowerment."

Abortion is a good example of this back-door approach. Although Bill Clinton told a group of seminary students at the Vatican that "the United States does not and will not support abortion as a means of birth control or population control," he has been contradicted by his press spokesman, Dee Dee Myers; by his own representative to the conference, former Senator Tim Wirth; and by the State Department's recent cable on Administration policy to all American diplomats, informing them that the U.S. supports "universal access to family planning and reproductive health services, including safe access to abortion." Naturally such a universal commitment is impossible without public funding, though it is much nicer to get your way on sensitive issues without having to say exactly what it is you want. And they looked set to get it in Cairo.

Until John Paul stepped in. Over the past few months the Pope has focused on Cairo in a way that he has on no other issue save perhaps the clash between freedom and totalitarianism. He perceives that there is more than meets the eye to terms like "reproductive rights for all people," "sexual health," "diversity of family forms," and "target audiences, particularly in the case of youth," which pop up throughout the draft. Almost weekly he or his proxies have raised public objections, and they have not minced words. "Biological colonialism," the Pope called it in July. This was followed by a declaration offered by John Cardinal O'Connor and endorsed by 113 of his fellow cardinals attacking the draft for trying to impose the "failed social policies" of the West on the Third World. Most recently the Pope's spokesman declared that what is at stake in Cairo is "the future of humanity."

Missing from the press accounts is any discussion of the world view that lies behind John Paul's unrelenting protest. This is scarcely the Pope's fault. His views were set out plainly in a document called *Ethical and Pastoral Dimensions of Population Trends,* released in March by the Pontifical Council for the Family. Grounded in Genesis, the orthodox Christian view is that man was made in the image of his Creator, that this Creator gave him an Earth that he should subdue and exercise dominion over, and that, in reviewing what He had wrought, the Lord found it "good." These ideas have serious implications, not least for how we as societies pursue our interests and what those interests are.

Two dimensions of this understanding are relevant here. First, private morality. Like most such documents, the Cairo draft claims to be morally neutral. Much of what is proposed in it under the guise of social science has already become accepted in America, where public discourse about sexuality has become entirely a matter of mechanics; the only question we dare ask is whether it is "safe." Orthodox Christian teaching, by contrast, grounds the sexual act in the love between husband and wife and the commitment of marriage.

One way to think of it is to compare it to an athlete's regimen. Without an understanding that exercise, diet, and avoidance of smoking are intended to make the body function better—indeed, to help the body function as it *ought*—things like push-ups would appear a form of masochism. And without an understanding that Christian teachings are designed to make us healthier human beings, the proscriptions against birth control, premarital sex, and the like come across as an arbitrary catechism of "don'ts" designed to frustrate natural desires. In the areas of love, marriage, and the dignity of the person, the Pope has been at his most eloquent, and he is absolutely right to see the UN's calls for adolescent access to contraception, its references to "the family, in all its forms," and its stress on individuals rather than couples as an attempt to prescribe the Swedish model for the Third World.

The Public Dimension

YET AS critical as this personal dimension might be to understanding the Church's position on population control, the social dimension demands equal consideration. It may even be more important, at least in terms of the argument at Cairo, for the push to commit the world's governments to intruding into areas they have traditionally held as beyond their bounds would enjoy no public support were it not for the idea that the development of impoverished peoples depends on such intrusion.

Certainly the Pope is right to call "simplistic" the dubious science and bogus economics that lie behind such an assumption. Here in Asia, home to the world's fastest-growing economies, the problem facing its now affluent societies is how to arrest the decline in their birth rates; countries that once encouraged people to have

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fewer children are now begging them, often with tax incentives, to have more ("Go for three," runs the Singapore slogan). Even China, with its immense population, is a far more complicated case than the experts care to admit. In booming Canton, a province of 66 million, the opening to markets has brought about a labor shortage, to the point where Canton has had to import some 10 million workers from other provinces. To put that in perspective, it means that a province with the population of the Philippines has in the course of 15 years of market reforms created work not only for all its own people but for another cohort equal to the working population of Malaysia. As a whole, China will continue to have an excess supply of labor until the rest of the country opens up as well. But if these reforms do in fact continue, it may be a very different story two decades from now.

What does any of this have to do with Church teaching? What the Church teaches on the personal level must be consistent with what it teaches on the social level. No one would deny that anyone who has children must, at least in the short term, give up some of his wealth to care for them, and in certain cases this may represent a personal hardship. An unmarried teenager who became pregnant, for example, would find her options circumscribed. The Church may well answer that she would not be justified in making an innocent life, a new third party, pay for her irresponsibility. But can the Church really teach that *society* is left worse off when one of its members does the right thing? That would be a profound contradiction of natural law. But this is the message when the Pope accepts, or appears to accept, the idea that there is a population "problem."

John Paul has undermined his own teaching by acknowledging a problem for which he then rules out the solution. His view is based on an incomplete understanding of wealth, an inclination to judge a society's virtue by its level of government spending, and a tendency to believe that many of the problems of the undeveloped world can be blamed on the "greed" of the West, rather than on the protectionist and collectivist policies of Third World countries. Above all he is wont to say "capitalism" when he probably means "materialism," as if there were no difference between the two and as if capitalism itself were not threatened by materialism.

True enough, this Pope has been far more sensitive than his predecessors to the role of markets and especially the importance of entrepreneurship, and his *Centesimus Annus* is a classic (not least for its sharp turn away from previous Church thinking on economics). But even *Centesimus Annus* has some odd bits: the Pope's call for international solidarity as a requirement for development is not just wrong, it again implies that the prosperity of the developed world comes at the expense of the Third World. Similar statements run all through other papal documents, notably *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, which reduces the great engine of capitalism to "the all-consuming desire for profit" and expresses John Paul's "solid conviction that what is hindering full development is that desire for profit."

Papal Nonsequitur

THIS LACK of understanding has led to a distressing Bush-like tendency to hop on the wrong train and then try to hop off before it arrives at its inevitable destination. Let me cite just one example. Back in December 1989, I received a phone call from Bishop James McHugh of Camden, New Jersey. For years Bishop McHugh has been one of the Church's point men on population issues, especially vis-à-vis the UN, and he has performed this task with courage and conviction. The day he called he was upset by an editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Called "The Pope's Omission," the editorial was pegged to a recent papal message on the environment. While it acknowledged the Pope's contributions to the environmental movement, it called him to account for his opposition to birth control, which *Inquirer* editors saw as essential to any solution to environmental problems. The editorial went further, attacking the Bush and Reagan Administrations for their denial of funds to the UNFPA on the basis of its involvement in China's population program.

Bishop McHugh was rightly agitated. Would I perhaps like to offer the *Inquirer* a column on the subject along with Julian Simon, who had

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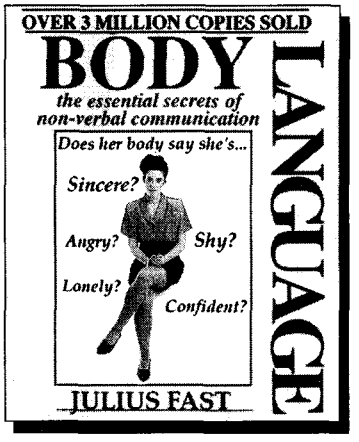

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also read the editorial? We did, though it never ran. And I'm not sure the good bishop would have been pleased if it had. For while we were dead opposed to the editorial's substance, its logic was flawless. If all the things the Pope has said in his World Day messages were in fact true—that there has been a "progressive decline in the quality of life," that developed nations must curb their greed because it is hurting the undeveloped world, that the Earth is "suffering" from this over-consumption—then the *Inquirer* is right: the more people, the worse it will get.

No serious economist, at least no serious free-market economist, accepts these problems as defined (much less the proposed "solutions"), and that little, unnoticed fact is well worth considering. You do not see Milton Friedman or Gary Becker on the front lines of the population-control movement, whatever their own convictions might be about birth control or abortion in personal life. To the contrary, the more free-market the economist is, the more he recognizes that in an open market each additional person necessarily produces more than he consumes—or he would never be paid. Obversely, it is no coincidence that those thumping for a state role in controlling population promote a state role in lots of other things too. The same Catholics Speak Out ad that called for a "male celibate hierarchy" to get in the ballgame on sex cited, in the very next sentence, the need to "redistribute" resources.

Thus the Pope only complicates things when he admits to "grave and serious problems" caused by overpopulation but then in the next breath encourages people to have as many children as they see fit given their circumstances. Worse still has been the failure to address head on the frankly pagan assumptions of the environmental movement, especially its insistence that everything is getting worse, not better. In fact, life expectancy in both the developed and the undeveloped worlds has been rising dramatically. As Julian Simon puts it, we face "an epidemic of life."

It's also a mistake for the Pope or the Vatican to endorse the Left-environmentalist argument that the economic problems of the undeveloped countries arise from the fact that the developed countries consume most of the world's wealth. What this argument ignores is the fact that the developed countries also *produce* most of the world's wealth. If wealth were to be "redistributed" by some central authority, much of it would never be produced in the first place.

Whatever else it may be, capitalism at its heart celebrates life and man's ability to create. To the welfare state another person means another mouth; to the capitalist economy it means another mind.

The Back-Door Option

MUCH of the confusion over these issues is understandable. Not a small part of it is deliberate. For the one thing the cultural elites have learned is that they cannot win by openly calling for state intrusion into intimate areas like sexuality and the family. As Gunnar Myrdal realized years ago, "the population question could be transformed into the most effective argument for a thorough and radical socialist remodeling of society." The key to this is not attacking traditional values but appearing to adopt them while in fact emptying them of their traditional meaning and filling the vacant place with "choice," "empowerment," "public health," and "families, in all their forms."

If he had not realized it before, John Paul must now appreciate that he is up against something far more powerful than Communism. By the time Karol Wojtyla became John Paul II, Communism was a dead religion. What we have with the effort to control is a living heresy: a mechanistic view of man and a pantheistic view of nature. The controllers' views on population and the environment and wealth emanate from these premises just as surely as the Pope's do from his.

John Paul has picked up the standard here when all those around him in public life have retreated. In so doing he has been forced, time and again, to return to the Church's timeless views on man, his relation with his fellows, and their relation with this world. Probably John Paul is doomed to lose this battle, at least in the sense that the delegates at Cairo will pass their plan of action with or without him. Yet by insisting on a different view, he has at least joined the argument and forced out into the open issues that his opponents had hoped would remain hidden.

In his courageous opposition to all that Cairo stands for, John Paul well understands who his enemies are. How much better he could resist them if he could learn to recognize some of his friends. □

Follow the Money?

DISCREDIT LINE

If you can't deal with someone's arguments, you can always attack his motives.

JACOB SULLUM

I RECENTLY received a handwritten note in the mail. The message was simple: "After reading your article 'Just How Bad Is Secondhand Smoke?' [*NR*, May 16] and seeing the ad for Benson & Hedges on the back of the magazine, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize you and your kind have an agenda to push."

Rather than question the plausibility of this reader's implicit accusation, let's assume that it's true: Philip Morris, *NR*, and I conspired to place my article in the same issue as a Benson & Hedges ad. Furthermore, I wrote the article because I secretly

Mr. Sullum is NR*'s articles editor.*

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work for Philip Morris. Would that affect the truth of what I wrote?

I raise the question because this form of ad hominem attack is quite popular these days, especially (but not exclusively) on the Left. Groups such as Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting and publications such as *The Nation* are obsessed with "following the money." When presented with conclusions they don't like, their first instinct is to ask about the author: "Who funds him?"

Motives over Evidence

ALLEGATIONS about financial ties often take the place of serious debate. Liberals criticize Christina Hoff Sommers, author of *Who Stole Feminism?*, for taking money from conservative foundations, while conservatives criticize Ralph Nader for taking money from trial lawyers. For the lazy mind, such attacks are an excuse to avoid the effort of considering arguments and evidence.

It's not surprising that this approach to controversy is common among newspaper reporters. In May, as part of a national advertising campaign, R. J. Reynolds reprinted an op-ed piece I had written for the *Wall Street Journal* outlining some of the problems with the Environmental Protection Agency's report on the health effects of secondhand smoke. At the time I was managing editor of *Reason* magazine, published by the Reason Foundation in Los Angeles. A few weeks later, I received a call from a writer for a Washington-based newspaper called the *Daily Citizen*. When I wrote the piece for the *Journal*, he asked, did I know that Philip Morris had given money to the Reason Foundation? Shouldn't I have *disclosed* that fact?

I asked him why, and he was not able to give me a coherent answer. But I got the drift of what he was suggesting: people should know about the donation so that they could assume I had been influenced by tobacco money and therefore discount what I had written. Well, I said, in 1993 Philip Morris gave Reason $10,000, which represented less than 0.4 per cent of the foundation's budget. It seems implausible that you could corrupt a think tank that cheaply. In any case, donations to the foundation had no impact on my pay or my job security. Furthermore, I had been taking the same positions on smoking policy for years. Not only that, but I disagreed with the tobacco companies on a number of issues, including the hazards of smoking, the propriety of "smokers' rights" laws, and the wisdom of drug prohibition.

By this point, not surprisingly, I was starting to sound a bit defensive. "I'm not trying to question your integrity," the reporter said. Of course, that is exactly what he was trying to do. He wanted to undermine my credibility by suggesting a hidden motivation. But in his enthusiasm to reveal the conspiracy behind my op-ed piece, he missed an important point: my motivation was completely irrelevant. In latching onto the donation from Philip Morris, he was committing a logical fallacy: impugn a person's motives, and you've weakened his argument.

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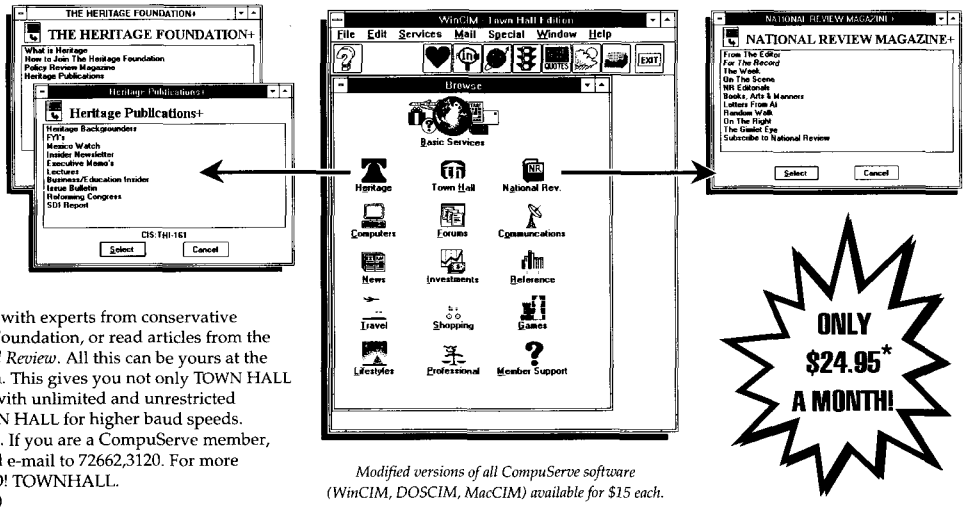

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My encounter with the *Daily Citizen* was just a preview. In July, Philip Morris bought full-page ads in newspapers throughout the country to reprint an article I had written for *Forbes MediaCritic* about press coverage of the secondhand-smoke issue. I first heard about this ad campaign from an AP reporter, who called to ask me about it. The story he wrote was fair by the usual journalistic standards, but it nevertheless implied that Philip Morris's donation was relevant in evaluating my work.

The AP story was followed by an article in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* headlined, "Philip Morris aided periodical," which noted that, in addition to giving money to the Reason Foundation, Philip Morris had advertised in *Reason*. The reporter did quote my comment that "people should be able to evaluate arguments and evidence on their merits." But again, the very reason for the story was to cast doubt on the credibility of my article.

Both of these reporters were fair-minded enough to call me and *Reason* for a response. Not so the *Los Angeles Times*, which summed up my article in a sentence and added: "The criticism of the EPA's science in the article, however, relied heavily on researchers who have received significant tobacco industry funds in the past, such as Alvan Feinstein, a Yale epidemiologist."

This is neither relevant nor surprising. Scientists who study smoking issues and have qualms about the case against secondhand smoke are unlikely to express them. They recognize that concerns about the hazards of secondhand smoke will encourage smokers to quit, an outcome they probably welcome. And they know that voicing their skepticism would expose them to intense criticism from their colleagues and could endanger funding from government agencies and anti-smoking groups. The few who do have the courage to speak up are apt to be sought out by tobacco companies as consultants and to attract research grants from them. If such funding is grounds for doubt, so is money from private organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, and government agencies, such as the California Department of Health, that are committed to achieving "a smoke-free society."

"Further," the *L.A. Times* continued, "both Philip Morris and its subsidiary, Kraft General Foods, were listed as 'major donors' in the Foundation's 1993 annual report." The money amounted to less than 1 per cent of the foundation's budget, even if you count the advertising revenue. But the reporter clearly thought it should lead people to question my conclusions.

It turns out that I am in distinguished company. In an August 17 letter to the *Wall Street Journal*, Scott Ballin, chairman of the Coalition on Smoking or Health, took issue with an article about tobacco taxes by economists Gary Becker and Michael Grossman. Ballin considered it "worth noting that Mr. Becker is a fellow at the Hoover Institution, and that Mr. Grossman is an associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, both of which have received substantial funding from Philip Morris, America's largest cigarette manufacturer." In Ballin's universe, it seems, the Hoover Institution and the National Bureau of Economic Research are fronts for the tobacco industry, and two highly respected economists (Becker won the Nobel Prize last year) are a couple of Philip Morris flacks.

The Money Trail

THIS SORT OF reasoning (if it can be called that) was endorsed by the majority staff of the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment in a July 22 press release headlined "The Tobacco Industry's Misinformation Campaign." It mentions me once, in a paragraph that begins: "Virtually the only scientists who support the industry's contentions are scientists with financial ties to the tobacco industry." (Although I appreciate the honor, I am not a scientist, just a humble journalist.) The press release dismisses me and my story in a sentence: "At the time he wrote the article reprinted in the Philip Morris ads, Jacob Sullum was the managing editor of *Reason* Magazine, which receives major donations from Philip Morris and its subsidiary Kraft General Foods." (The donations were neither "major" nor to the magazine, but never mind.)

I called the subcommittee to find out why the authors of the press release had seen fit to include this information in a document that was ostensibly addressing criticism of the EPA report. "I think it's interesting to look at financial links," said Phil Barnett, counsel to the subcommittee. I asked him why. "It goes to the point of whether . . . people have financial relationships." And why is this important? "I think it's self-explanatory. It makes the point that there are financial links. I think it speaks for itself." I assured him that it didn't, but no matter how I pressed him, he would not spell out the insinuation. He just kept repeating, "I think it speaks for itself."

Neither the press accounts nor the subcommittee's press release (nor a longer press release from the EPA, which managed to discuss the Philip Morris ads without mentioning me) actually dealt with the *MediaCritic* article. The piece has been out for months now, and no one has contacted me to question its accuracy, even though it criticizes several journalists by name. *MediaCritic* has not received any letters pointing out errors or challenging my criticism of the press coverage. So far as I know, the article has not been refuted in any important respect. Yet people are being invited to dismiss it as tobacco-industry propaganda.

The journalists and congressional staffers who take this tack surely would not want it adopted as a general rule. Henry Waxman (D., Calif.), chairman of the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, has received campaign contributions from several wineries and from organizations representing health-care providers, including the American Medical Association. Does that mean we should ignore anything he might have to say about alcohol or health care? The *Los Angeles Times* runs ads for automobiles and packaged food (even products made by Kraft, a *subsidiary of Philip Morris*). Should we therefore be suspicious of the paper's reporting on those industries? As Ballin noted, even supposedly independent scholars work for institutions that receive corporate donations. From this perspective, the only people you can *really* trust are funded by taxpayers, who have no choice in the matter.

Yet everyone has an agenda, financial or otherwise. Bureaucrats and researchers may be driven by ideology, by a hunger for power, publicity, or funding, or simply by the desire to re-

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duce smoking and thereby improve "the public health." If we have independent reasons to believe that someone is shading the truth, these agendas can help explain why. But the motivations themselves do not discredit the conclusions. Indeed, the main point of my *MediaCritic* article was that reporters should stop pretending that only one side in the debate about secondhand smoke has an axe to grind. Instead of taking intellectual shortcuts, they should start assessing the arguments on both sides. Are they valid? Are they backed up by evidence? What does the research show? How was it conducted? Do the data justify the conclusions drawn by the researchers? This is the way that science and journalism—and any endeavor that aims at the truth—should proceed.

But what else do you expect me and my kind to say? □

Questioning Capital Punishment

INNOCENTS ON DEATH ROW?

Justice Blackmun is convinced that innocent people are likely to be executed. What is the evidence?

STEPHEN MARKMAN

IN ANNOUNCING earlier this year that he would "no longer tinker with the machinery of death" by voting to sustain capital punishment, Justice Harry Blackmun relied not only upon an understanding of the Constitution informed more by his own curious conscience than by the text or history of that document but also upon his belief that "innocent persons have been executed . . . and will continue to be executed under our death-penalty scheme."

In making this assertion, Justice Blackmun cited a study published several years ago in the *Stanford Law Review* by two longtime opponents of capital punishment, Hugo Bedau and Michael Radelet. The authors purported to identify "350 cases in which defendants convicted of capital or potentially capital crimes in this century, and in many cases sentenced to death, have later been found to be innocent." This finding was widely heralded in national press releases issued by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Lest such a pseudo-fact gain permanent currency in the capital-punishment debate, Paul Cassell and I, both with the Department of Justice at the time, undertook to study these same cases. Since our findings, also published in the *Stanford Law Review*, were unaccountably overlooked by Justice Blackmun, I feel compelled to summarize them in order to place the ongoing debate in its proper historical context.

The danger of executing an innocent person, as well as the uniquely irremediable nature of such a mistake, can hardly be denied by even the most committed proponent of the death penalty. The overwhelming majority of Americans who support the death penalty do not imagine that society is able to administer it with "Godlike perspicacity," in Walter Berns's phrase. Rather, they support it because, through a combination of deterrence, incapacitation, and the imposition of just punishment, the death penalty serves to protect a vastly greater number of innocent lives than are likely to be lost through its erroneous application. Some may further believe that a society would be guilty of a suicidal failure of nerve if it were to forgo the use of an appropriate and deserved punishment simply because it is not humanly possible to eliminate the risk of mistake entirely.

Indeed, the Bedau–Radelet study is remarkable not (as Justice Blackmun seems to believe) for demonstrating that mistakes involving the death penalty are common, but rather for demonstrating how *uncommon* they are. Indeed, to make the finer point, this study—the most thorough and painstaking analysis ever on the subject—fails to prove that a single such mistake has occurred in the United States during this century.

Where Is the Evidence?

ONE cannot state categorically that mistakes never have been made, but the burden properly belongs with those who have endorsed the proposition that innocent persons have been executed with some degree of regularity in this country. Such a burden lies with Justice Blackmun and his allies because in every capital case a unanimous jury of 12 citizens concluded beyond a reasonable doubt that an individual had committed a capital crime, usually first-degree murder. Further, in every one of these cases a trial judge and an assortment of appellate judges concluded both that the trial was fair and that the 12 jurors had acted reasonably in their determination. While such procedures do not give iron-clad assurances that innocent people have not been convicted, they place the burden of proof squarely upon the opposition.

Given that the Bedau–Radelet study has been relied upon by a Supreme Court Justice to demonstrate something relevant to the matter of wrongful executions, it does not seem picky to inquire whether or not wrongful executions are anywhere in evidence. The figure of "350" cases (since increased to 416), which was highlighted by the ACLU in its press releases, does not refer to 350 Americans wrongfully executed. In the majority of these cases, the death penalty either was not available or was not the sentence given. The number includes cases of people who were charged with capital crimes but con-

Mr. Markman, a Detroit lawyer, served as Assistant Attorney General of the United States for Legal Policy during the Reagan Administration.

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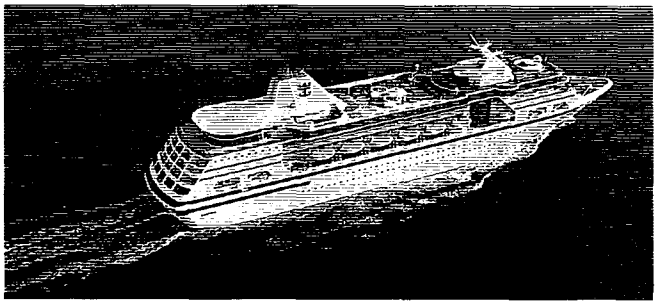

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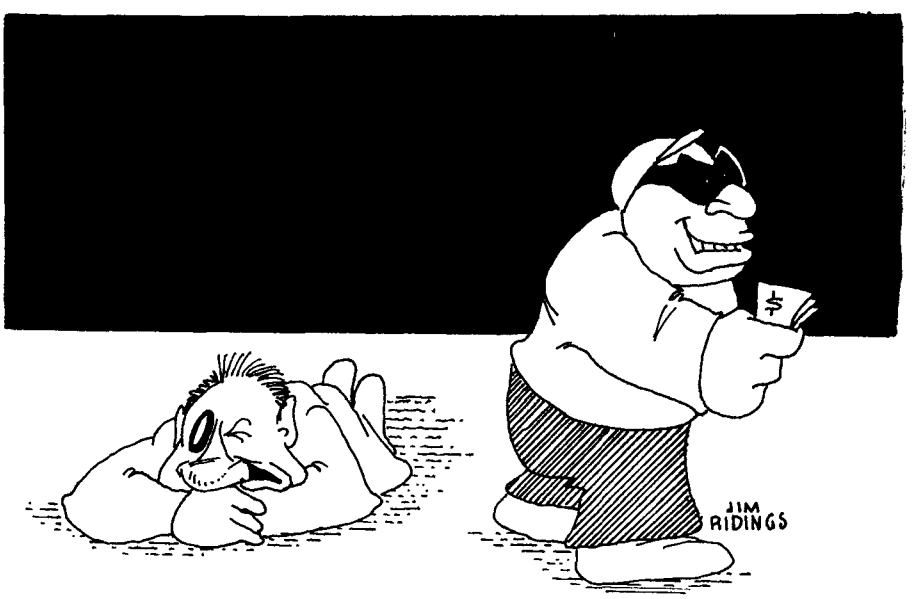
victed of lesser offenses, such as second-degree murder or manslaughter; people who were convicted of capital crimes but sentenced to imprisonment rather than death; and people who were convicted of capital crimes but who had their convictions overturned on appeal. Only 200 of the allegedly wrongful convictions in the Bedau–Radelet study involve first-degree murders in which capital punishment was an option, and in only 139 of these 200 cases were the defendants actually sentenced to death. In only 23 of these 139 cases were the death sentences actually carried out.

So, if there were wrongful executions, it is with regard to these 23 cases, not with regard to those cases in which, as Bedau and Radelet put it, "relatively adventitious factors" occurred to prevent the execution of allegedly innocent people. But appellate review, the exercise of judicial discretion in sentencing, and legislative decisions not to prescribe capital sanctions for crimes falling short of first-degree murder are not "relatively adventitious factors." Focusing on trial-court dispositions alone completely ignores the procedural protections against erroneous convictions that are built into the system. "Relatively adventitious" factors have, in fact, interceded in 94 per cent of all those cases in which Bedau and Radelet concluded that innocent people were convicted of capital offenses.

Thus, only 23 of the cited cases are relevant to Justice Blackmun's concerns. What is the standard by which the authors assure us that miscarriages of justice occurred in these cases? Their standard is whether "a majority of neutral observers, given the evidence at [the authors'] disposal, would judge the defendant in question to be innocent." But as they acknowledge, "in none of these cases . . . can we point to the implication of another person or to the confession of the true killer, much less to any official action admitting the execution of an innocent person."

Instead, Bedau and Radelet appear to have scoured defendants' briefs, collected newspaper rumors, transcribed the "unshaken convictions" of defense attorneys, and identified lapses in prosecutorial conduct or trial procedure. On the basis of such evidence, the authors assert their own conclusions that people sentenced to death "have later been found to be innocent" or "proved to be innocent."



"I feel so much better knowing this wasn't a 'hate crime.'"

Guilty after All?

EXAMINATION of individual cases cited by the authors will only confirm the reasonableness of the jury's verdict to at least some "neutral observers." Consider, for example, the case of James Adams, one of the 23, who was convicted of first-degree murder and executed in 1984. His case is significant in that it is the only alleged example of an erroneous execution since capital-punishment procedures were radically revamped by the Supreme Court in 1976. Here is the authors' description of the evidence:

> Witnesses located Adams's car at the time of the crime at the home of the victim, a white rancher. Some of the victim's jewelry was found in the car trunk. Adams maintained his innocence, claiming that he had loaned the car to his girlfriend. A witness identified Adams as driving the car away from the victim's home shortly after the crime. This witness, however, was driving a large truck in the direction opposite to Adams and probably could not have had a good look at the driver. It was later discovered that this witness was angry with Adams for allegedly dating his wife. A second witness heard a voice inside the victim's home at the time and saw someone fleeing. He stated this voice was a woman's; the day after the crime he stated that the fleeing person was positively not Adams. More importantly, a hair sample found clutched in the victim's hand, which in all likelihood had come from the assailant, did not match Adams's hair.

Despite being presented with this evidence "a month before Adams's execution," Florida Governor (now Senator) Robert Graham "refused to grant even a short stay so that these questions could be resolved."

This analysis of the Adams trial record, which Justice Blackmun has relied upon in his opposition to the death penalty, seriously distorts and misrepresents the evidence. A more thorough analysis of the testimony reveals the following:

1. The witness driving the truck was able to identify Adams as the driver of the car because the car was weaving so badly that the witness had to pull over to the far side of the road and stop. Indeed, the car came very close to hitting him. The witness identified Adams from a line-up the day after the incident.

2. With respect to Adams's dating the witness's wife, such a theory was raised by the defense counsel in his opening argument. However, no evidence to that effect was ever presented at trial. Indeed, Adams never even raised the issue in his post-trial motions, although it would have been relevant to the witness's credibility.

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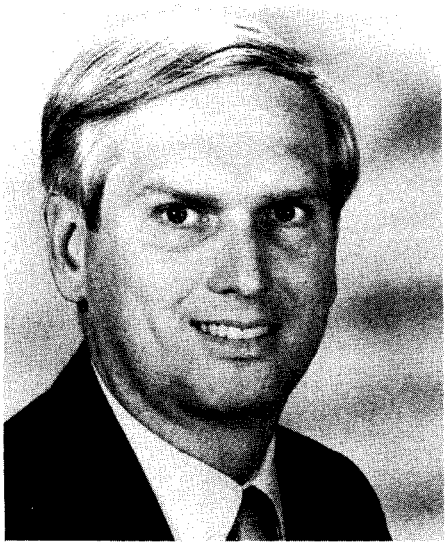

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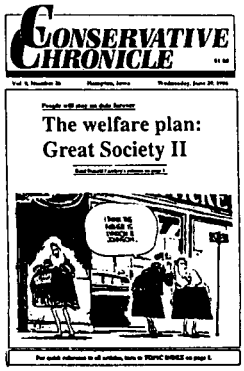

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3. In recalling having heard a "woman's" voice in the house, the second witness was referring to the voice not of the killer but of the person being killed. Furthermore, his general description of the person fleeing the house matched Adams. This witness said only that he could not identify Adams with certainty as the fleeing person, not that it was "positively not Adams."

4. The allegedly exculpatory hair sample was made known to Adams's counsel well before trial. He chose not even to offer it either at trial or on appeal. Most likely, the hair had come from sweepings of the floor of the ambulance carrying the victim to the hos-

Justice by Quota

AFTER the Omnibus Crime Bill suffered its setback in mid August, the Clinton Administration tried to revive it by promising members of the Congressional Black Caucus that federal prosecutors would consider race in death-penalty cases. The offer was in lieu of the so-called Racial Justice Act, which would have allowed defendants in capital cases to challenge death sentences on the basis of "racial disparity."

Underlying both the Racial Justice Act and the Administration's promise is a dangerous notion: unless the racial composition of condemned prisoners reflects that of the general population, the death penalty is discriminatory. Thus, since blacks convicted of murder (whose victims are themselves overwhelmingly black) outnumber their white counterparts roughly 8 to 1, and since Asian-Americans rarely kill anyone, executions cannot be permitted.

Race should never be a factor in criminal law, especially in matters of life and death. Yet opponents of capital punishment insist upon making it an issue, in effect seeking racial quotas for executions. However, the claim that death sentences are racially biased has never been demonstrated.

Black and Hispanic prisoners are about as likely as white prisoners to be serving a sentence of life imprisonment or death. According to a 1991 survey of state prison inmates by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, between 1986 and 1991 6.9 per cent of convicted whites received life sentences, compared to 7.1 per cent for blacks and 6.7 per cent for Hispanics. Similarly, the percentage of inmates serving sentences of life without parole was the same for both whites and blacks: 0.7 per cent. And most significantly, 0.5 per cent of convicted whites, 0.3 per cent of convicted blacks, and 0.4 per cent of convicted Hispanics received the death penalty.

If the oft-repeated claim of "pervasive racism" against blacks in capital cases were valid, one would expect it to show up in statistical trends. Yet the numbers show no such thing. From 1977 to 1991, slightly more than four thousand felons received death sentences in the United States. Of these, 59 per cent were white, 39.6 per cent were black, and 7.4 per cent were Hispanic. Of the 157 who were actually executed, 54 per cent were white, 39 per cent were black, and 6 per cent were Hispanic.

In 1984, the U.S. witnessed the highest number of executions (21) of any year since 1976, when three Supreme Court cases upheld the death penalty. The statistical breakdown of death sentences for 1984, published in *Corrections Today*, is revealing, though not surprising: 1,405 people were sentenced to death, all of whom had been convicted of murder. Of these, 1,388 were male, 17 were female; 804 were white, 585 were black, and 16 were classified as members of other races. Of the 21 who actually were executed, 13 were white males, 7 were black males, and 1 was a white female.

A similar profile emerges from statistics compiled by the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. In its March 1986 newsletter, the group identifies the race of each death-row inmate executed between January 1977 and January 1986. Of the 51 people executed, 34 were white and 17 were black. No commentary on racial imbalance attended these statistics.

A twist on the racial-disparity argument says that, even if black murderers are no more likely to be executed than white murderers, black murderers are more likely to get the death penalty when they kill whites than when they kill blacks. But there is a common-sense explanation for this phenomenon that has nothing to do with racism. When a murder involves people of different races, it is more likely that the victim and the killer are strangers, and such murders tend to be of the kinds where the death penalty applies. Whites are significantly more likely to be murdered by a stranger—and by someone of a different race—than blacks are.

In connection with a 1987 Supreme Court case, Joseph Katz, a professor of statistics at Georgia State University, examined data used in the defense of a black man who was sentenced to death for the murder of a white Atlanta police officer. Katz organized the data into four categories: black-on-black murder, black-on-white murder, white-on-white murder, and white-on-black murder. Black-on-black murder normally was drug-, gang-, or family-related—i.e., cases that do not typically qualify for the death penalty. In contrast, blacks frequently killed whites in the context of burglary or robbery and thus were eligible for the death penalty based on double felony charges. Whites killed whites in burglaries or robberies about as often as in family disputes. The final category Katz analyzed, white-on-black murder, occurred too infrequently for a pattern to be discernible.

Lacking a legitimate philosophical basis for opposing capital punishment, many abolitionists in desperation reach for the race card. Claims of "racial bias" allow the anti-death-penalty crowd to assume the mantle of civil rights. But to suggest that the ultimate in human crimes should not be met with the ultimate in punishment simply because of skin color is not justice or compassion. It is racism, pure and simple.

—J. DARYL CHARLES

Mr. Charles is a resident scholar at the Wilberforce Forum of Prison Fellowship.

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pital or from one of several people who attempted to treat the victim's wounds at the death scene, not from the killer's head.

5. Adams's alibi defense was that he was not in the area of the crime on the day of the crime. He was contradicted on this by three other witnesses who placed him or his car at the scene shortly before the crime. In addition, Adams's own alibi witness contradicted him on his whereabouts at the time of the crime.

6. Several hours after the murder, Adams took his car to a body shop and asked to have it painted a different color.

7. When arrested by police later that day driving a friend's car, Adams had in his possession a twenty-dollar bill stained with blood of the victim's type. When asked about the blood, Adams said that it had come from a cut on his finger. Adams's blood type did not match that on the bill.

8. When arrested, Adams had in his possession his own bloodied clothing; the blood matched the victim's. He was also found in the possession of jewelry and eyeglasses from the victim's house.

9. In addition, evidence was presented concerning Adams's demeanor following the murder, the circumstance of his having $200 in his possession shortly after having borrowed $35 from two friends, the likelihood that this amount of money in the particular denominations had been in the victim's possession that day, and a series of conflicting statements made by Adams to the police.

All in all, evaluation of the Adams evidence would be likely to persuade few "neutral observers" that the jury had acted unreasonably in determining that Adams was guilty of homicide. Bedau and Radelet give little weight to the considered judgments of juries and judges who have decided and reviewed cases, but it is unclear why the judgments of these particular "neutral observers" are accorded so little deference.

The authors are able to maintain that Adams was a victim of a "miscarriage of justice" only by relying upon a highly skewed picture of the evidence. Moreover, this treatment of the Adams case is not an aberration. Rather, it is systematic throughout their analysis of these instances of allegedly wrongful execution. The Adams case is far from the weakest of those argued by Bedau and Radelet.

Next Case

IN THE case of Everett Applegate, executed for murdering his wife with rat poison in 1938, the authors claim that he was innocent because "virtually no evidence against him existed beyond [a co-defendant's] unsupported word." Even if that were true, which it is not, it would not compel the conclusion that Applegate was innocent. Additional evidence, however, was supplied at trial relating to Applegate's motives for killing his wife (his desire to marry another woman and his wife's intention to disclose to authorities information about his continuing sexual relations with a minor), his purchase of rat poison at a drugstore the night of the murder, his admission that he had given his wife that evening considerable amounts of eggnog which happened to be poisoned, and his refusal to consent to an autopsy on his wife.

In the case of Sie Dawson, convicted of murdering a 2-year-old child in 1964, Bedau and Radelet base their characterization of his execution as erroneous upon the fact that "years later, newspaper stories revived doubts that had surrounded the conviction from the beginning." However, Dawson had provided a written confession to the police only after learning that an eyewitness was alive; he had repeated the confession 12 days later; the confession was corroborated in its details by independent evidence from other witnesses; and an eyewitness to the crime—the 4-year-old brother of the victim, who had been left for dead—told his father and police that Dawson was the one who had killed his brother.

In the case of Stephen Grzechowiak and Max Rybarczyk, executed in 1930 for killing a man during a robbery, Bedau and Radelet choose to ignore the confessions of two of the three people involved in the murder (including Rybarczyk's, made at the behest of his mother), the oral confessions of the third individual before several witnesses, and Rybarczyk's simultaneous written confession to another slaying which was corroborated in its details. Further, none of the three argued that he had ever been subject to inappropriate police interrogation.

In the case of Charles Louis Tucker, executed in 1906 for stabbing a young woman to death during a robbery, Bedau and Radelet disparage the evidence as "circumstantial only." There is nothing inherently inadequate about "circumstantial" evidence. In this case, such evidence included a blood-stained knife that matched both the wounds on the victim's body and tears in her corset, Tucker's aborted efforts to destroy the knife, a slip of paper bearing Tucker's handwriting found near the body, a bank note in Tucker's possession identical to one removed from the victim's purse, and a pin removed from the victim's body and found in Tucker's coat pocket.

Several of the cases suggest an analysis motivated more strongly by ideology than by a commitment to following the evidence wherever it might lead. In the case of the legendary union organizer Joe Hill, executed in 1915 for shooting a shopkeeper, Bedau and Radelet cite a work of fiction—an "act of imagination," in their words—to support their conclusion that Hill was not guilty. This, despite eyewitness testimony that linked Hill to the crime, evidence that he sought medical attention for a fresh bullet wound the evening of the murder, evidence that the bullet was of the same type as that fired by the victim at his assailant, evidence that Hill asked his doctor not to reveal his wound, and an admission by Hill that he had discarded a gun shortly after leaving the doctor.

The inclusion of Sacco and Vanzetti among the erroneously executed has been answered by Francis Russell, among many others, at far greater length than can be done here.

Not Infallible, but . . .

AGAIN, it cannot be disputed that error is possible in the process of imposing any criminal sanctions, including the death penalty. But, where juries and judges have unanimously concluded and repeatedly re-concluded that there is no reasonable doubt of a person's guilt, those who would question these determinations carry the burden of proof.

After "sustained and systematic" research, Bedau and Radelet have pointed to 23 out of more than 7,000 executions during the twentieth cen-

(Continues on page 92)

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How to Think about Race

MARK SNYDERMAN

WHAT MUST Pat Shipman think of Phillipe Rushton? Dr. Shipman describes how the scientific study of racial difference has too often been polluted by political forces; she proclaims her allegiance to science, and declares that we are better off knowing the unaltered truth about racial differences. But her rhetoric betrays great fear of what science may reveal.

Phillipe Rushton apparently has no such fear. Although his story is absent from Dr. Shipman's book, it would fit neatly. Mr. Rushton, a professor of psychology at the University of Western Ontario, has endured excoriation because he has dared to posit an evolutionary/genetic explanation for racial differences in a wide variety of physical and behavioral characteristics. Undeterred, he has even appeared on *Geraldo* (though this episode may demonstrate more an ignorance of American television than fortitude). Mr. Rushton's new book—a synthesis of a vast body of scientific research on racial differences—is his most ambitious, and fearless, work. Pat Shipman should be happy. She probably won't be.

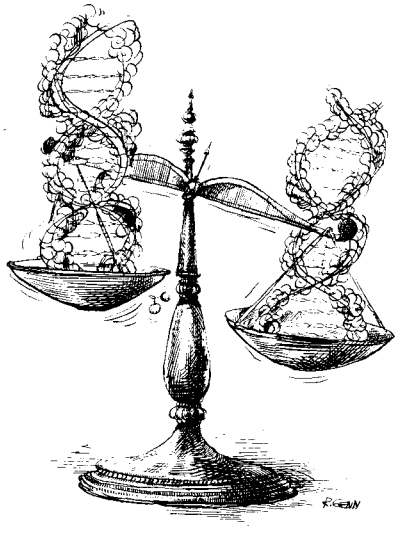
The Evolution of Racism: Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science, by Pat Shipman (Simon & Schuster, 320 pp., $23)

Race, Evolution, and Behavior: A Life History Perspective, by J. Phillipe Rushton (Transaction, 398 pp., $34.95)

Dr. Shipman's book, *The Evolution of Racism*, is beautifully written, and endlessly intriguing, but one is never quite sure what it is supposed to be about. For starters, the title is misleading. The book is only marginally about racism, as the word is commonly understood.

What Dr. Shipman does present is a series of case studies, told largely through biographical accounts, of the politicization of scientific debate over racial differences and genetic explanations of behavior. These are fascinating stories, well told. But the stories have no clear moral.

The book begins with a wonderful portrayal of Darwin's insecurity about his new theory, of Thomas Huxley's unabashed championing of Darwinism, and of Huxley's famous debate with Bishop Wilberforce which put the theory of evolution over the top. Dr. Shipman begins the real discussion of race with the clash between the owlish Rudolf Virchow, perhaps the pre-eminent German scientist of the mid nineteenth century, and the vigorous Aryan Ernst Haeckel. Virchow opposed the theory of evolution because he thought it inconsistent with his own scientific theories and a fundamental challenge to his view of the social order, while Haeckel championed Darwinism and then used it to further his theories of racial superiority and his political position. Dr. Shipman decries the damage to science in the ensuing struggle.



Roman Genn

There follows a discussion of the eugenics movement and of Hitler (who sought justification in Haeckel's writings), and the post-war backlash against the scientific study of race. Dr. Shipman gives us an enlightening account of anthropologist Ashley Montagu, a vehement anti-racist and author of the 1950 UNESCO Statement on Race. The Ashley Montagu Statement, as it has come to be known, denies the validity of any notion that human groups differ in innate characteristics of intelligence or temperament, and touts scientific support for "the ethic of universal brotherhood."

Montagu subsequently was among those who led the attack on Carleton Coon. According to Dr. Shipman, Coon was "a man betrayed by history." An anthropologist-explorer trained in the early twentieth century, Coon published his life's work, *The Origin of Races*, in 1962. His thesis was that the various races developed long ago—a half million years before we became *Homo sapiens*—and that some races developed into modern humans more slowly than others. Whatever its merits, Dr. Shipman explains, this was a work of science, not of racial politics. Yet it is not difficult to imagine the reaction to such a work in 1962, at the very moment that the civil-rights movement was coming into full swing. What is remarkable is that so much of the criticism from other scientists took the form of personal attack and political diatribe. As the line between concerned scientist and social activist blurred, genetic and evolutionary accounts of racial differences simply would not be tolerated even by those whose job it was to search for the truth: "It was an unresolvable conflict between the fervent social activist and the irascible scientific purist. But the tenor of the times was such that it was the scientific purist, Coon, who was disgraced and, to some extent, driven out of his profession."

Dr. Shipman's final case study is the tale of an attorney and researcher named David Wasserman. Mr. Wasserman had the idea to sponsor a conference on the legal and social implications of behavioral genetic studies of

Mr. Snyderman is co-author of The IQ Controversy: The Media and Public Policy *(Transaction).*

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criminality. The story of how his innocent project became entangled in, and eventually destroyed by, the racially charged reaction to a wholly independent Bush Administration program is out of Kafka. Like many interested in biology and behavior, Mr. Wasserman was defeated by those who believe that there are some questions science simply should not ask.

In the end, one wonders where Dr. Shipman stands on this issue. She bemoans the politicization of science and proclaims that we are better off studying racial differences, yet she is afraid of what such research might find. Her fear comes very close to overwhelming her defense of science. Thus, the book ends with the following cryptic summation:

> The trajectory begun with Darwin has run its course. No one has sought to provoke a bitter controversy, but the value of differences among humans has reached out its sticky pseudopods and engulfed the unwary over and over again. The monster cannot be outrun; it threatens us all. There is a real danger here. . . .To date, we have feared to wrestle with it openly, we have turned our heads and shielded our eyes from the horror of the problem. Rather than face the monster, we have played, instead, at politicizing first evolutionary theory and then genetics, for we are intrinsically political animals and it is a game that comes naturally. We have fought each other—called each other names, accused each other of sinister intent, promulgated bitter insinuations—instead of fighting ignorance. In so doing, we have given the hate-mongers time to feed the monster. It has swelled on a steady diet of racial divisiveness, lies, and half-truths until it is strong enough to destroy us all.

What exactly is this "monster" to which Dr. Shipman refers? It is, apparently, the truth about human differences. How are we to handle the truth, if it "threatens us all"?

Dr. Shipman's unsatisfying answer is to trust in the power of the environment. Should it turn out that there is a significant genetic component to individual and racial differences in behavior, she concludes, "Our only hope lies in the certainty that these attributes are subject to tremendous environmental modification." For her, this is simply an article of faith.

Dr. Shipman's fear of the genetic is evident in her readiness to reject biological explanations. In criticizing early behavioral genetics, for example, she explains that "we have a different perspective on what traits are heritable today." She takes as an example the perceived difference in volubility between Italians and Finns. "Is it because Italians more commonly carry genes for talkativeness than Finns? It is wildly improbable that this is so, for how could such a gene work?" This is a naïve response from a physical anthropologist. Of course there is no single gene for talkativeness, yet there plainly is some genetic mechanism that allows humans to talk (unless Dr. Shipman postulates that the lack of speech in other species is entirely due to a difference in environment). Why, then, is it difficult to imagine that this genetic mechanism might differ in degree among individuals or groups?

Dr. Shipman's unease about any genetic explanation is particularly apparent in her treatment of intelligence, which lies at the heart of the controversy about racial differences. She follows unthinkingly the argument set forth by Stephen Jay Gould in his 1981 book *The Mismeasure of Man*. The argument is that the development of intelligence tests in the early part of this century was driven largely by the eugenics movement and belief in the inferiority of certain groups. The upshot of this argument is a form of guilt by association: intelligence tests were born of racism; thus they must retain their racist tint. Mr. Gould's conclusion, which Dr. Shipman parrots, is that intelligence tests at best are extremely sensitive to environmental variation, and therefore are of limited usefulness in measuring intelligence or establishing any genetic component to differences in intellectual functioning.

Mr. Gould is wrong, and so is Dr. Shipman. While it is true that racists found some support in early test results, the historical record reveals that the majority of early mental testers were engaged in a legitimate scientific enterprise. There were flaws in these tests to be sure, as there are flaws today, but the large-scale problems with test development and administration to which Mr. Gould points have been eliminated. Evidence of the validity of modern intelligence and aptitude tests, and of the significant heritable component to individual differences in intelligence, is beyond rational refutation. (The genetic basis of group differences remains uncertain.) In following Mr. Gould, Dr. Shipman has fallen prey to the same environmentalist bias she condemns in the reaction to Coon and Wasserman.

WHAT IF she is wrong? What if scientific investigation reveals, for example, that there are average differences in intelligence between members of different races that cannot be accounted for by any known sources of environmental variation? Faith in the power of the environment will not shield us from that monster.

Phillipe Rushton is willing to accept the results of his science. He describes hundreds of studies worldwide that show a consistent pattern of human racial differences. The three primary human racial groups—Mongoloids (Orientals), Negroids (blacks), and Caucasoids (Caucasians)—show significant average differences in such characteristics as intelligence, brain size, genital size, strength of sex drive, reproductive potency, industriousness, sociability, and rule following. On each of these variables, the groups are aligned in the order: Orientals, Caucasians, blacks. On average, according to the data Mr. Rushton reports, Orientals are more intelligent, have larger brains for their body size, have smaller genitalia, have less sex drive, are less fecund, work harder, and are more readily socialized than Caucasians; and Caucasians on average bear the same relationship to blacks. There is, of course, tremendous variation within each group on each of these variables, and a great degree of overlap between groups. The group differences Mr. Rushton reports are not large, but they are demonstrable.

He proposes an evolutionary explanation based on "life history theory." The theory assumes "that each species (or subspecies, such as a race) has evolved a characteristic life history adapted to the particular ecological problems encountered by its ancestors." These strategies are organized along a continuum from "K-strategies" to "r-strategies." K-strategies "emphasize high levels of parental care, resource acquisition, kin provisioning, and social complexity," while r-strategies "emphasize gamete production, mating behavior, and high reproductive rates." Compared to other species, humans are K-strategists. Based on the data he reports, Mr. Rushton observes that Orientals are the most K-

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strategizing of the human races, and blacks are the most r-strategizing.

According to Mr. Rushton, r-strategies evolve in environments in which the population is kept below the carrying capacity of the environment (that is, where there are more resources for survival than there are members of the population to use them) because of unpredictable factors such as weather or predators. K-strategies are more adaptive in environments in which the population is close to carrying capacity and competitive interactions among individuals are important. Put simply, when there are abundant resources, organisms are better off producing many offspring and letting them fend for themselves; when the environment is difficult, organisms are better off putting their resources into equipping each offspring to survive.

Mr. Rushton's thesis now falls into place. Blacks evolved in Africa in an abundant but unpredictable environment that favored reproduction over nurturance, relative to other human populations. The harsh environment of northeast Asia in which Orientals evolved favored more nurturing, socialization, and greater intellectual capacity. Caucasian evolution in Eurasia imposed intermediate pressures.

Underlying Mr. Rushton's thesis is the contention that there is a genetic basis for much of the observed between-race variation he reports. Here is where he will meet the most resistance. Behavioral genetic studies of between-race differences are notoriously difficult, as Mr. Rushton admits. Nonetheless he strongly argues for a genetic component to average between-race differences. He presents much behavioral genetic evidence on the question, but his most compelling argument is intuitive. What possible environmental variables could account for the systematic alignment of the races on such a wide variety of characteristics, including behavioral traits evident soon after birth, "the speed of dental and other maturational variables, the size of the brain, the number of gametes produced, [and] the physiological differences in testosterone"? The strictly environmental hypothesis also is undermined by the various studies that demonstrate a significant genetic component to within-race individual differences on each of the behavioral and physical characteristics and the fact that these racial differences are consistent across cultures. Mr. Rushton contends that only an evolutionary/genetic explanation makes sense of these disparate data.

This is dynamite he fails to handle with sufficient care. Mr. Rushton tries in the preface of his book to temper the impact of what follows. He notes that he is dealing for the most part with relatively small group differences, and that these differences are likely the result of environmental determination as much as genetic. He explains also that the mechanisms that mediate genetic effects offer "numerous ways for intervention and the alleviation of suffering." His three-paragraph caveat is a tame cousin to the paean to the environment with which Pat Shipman ends her book. As such, it is woefully inadequate to head off any of the attack that is to come. Mr. Rushton must be aware of this; he seems not to care. "There are no necessary policies that flow from race research," he declares. His reliance on this single idea indicates either a naïveté about political reality or an unshakable faith in science.

Mr. Rushton is not naïve. He begins his book with a discussion of the difficulties of the scientific study of race:

> The propensity to defend one's own group, to see it as special, and not to be susceptible to the laws of evolutionary biology makes the scientific study of ethnicity and race differences problematic. Theories and facts generated in race research may be used by ethnic nationalists to propagate political positions. Antiracists may also engage in rhetoric to deny differences and suppress discoveries. Findings based on the study of race can be threatening. Ideological mine fields abound in ways that do not pertain in other areas of inquiry.

This passage could serve as a summary of Pat Shipman's treatise. Mr. Rushton adds a twist. He posits that the politicization of the scientific study of race may itself have evolutionary origins. He devotes a chapter to genetic similarity theory, the hypothesis that "genetically similar people tend to seek one another out and to provide mutually supportive environments." This phenomenon, according to Mr. Rushton, "may represent a biological factor underlying ethnocentrism." Thus, the reaction to work like Mr. Rushton's may have deeper roots than in our present environment.

Phillipe Rushton has written his own epitaph. Any genetic predisposition toward the defense of one's race only adds to the near impossibility of rational response to the scientific study of race in a world that has seen the Holocaust and racial subjugation. As he explains, "The evolutionary psychology of race differences has become the most politically incorrect topic in the world today." Mr. Rushton's work may be ignored by the fearful, damned by the liberals, and misused by the racists. It is unlikely to be truly understood by anyone. □

New Republicans?

COLIN WELCH

WE ENGLISH think of your magazine *The New Republic* as the American equivalent of our own lefty *New Statesman*. Confronted by a fat anthology of *New Republic* wit and wisdom, we would expect to find in it many of the characteristic pungent and unappetizing ingredients of *New Statesman*ship and *New State*craft. What are these? To list a few at random:

Much "liberalism" in the decadent American (and now British) sense, i.e., much socialism (which Paul Johnson has called the anti-Semitism of intellectuals as anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools); much willing of ends but not of means; much endorsement of bad means for good ends, or for bad ends or for no ends, for their own sake, for intellectuals themselves are prone to original sin, which they deny. We find no enemies, of course, on the Left, a sharp eye for evils at home in the West, a blind eye to evils abroad, unless committed by whites, fascists, racists, dictators, capitalists, kings, generals, or other certified enemies of the human race.

Mr. Welch is the former deputy editor at the London Daily Telegraph.

The New Republic Reader: Eighty Years of Opinion and Debate, edited by Dorothy Wickenden (Basic, 518 pp., $28)

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We find too a tendency to detect acute danger in small, weak, remote, and unthreatening states like South Africa was, and to ignore it in huge and menacing states like the Soviet Union was, and may again be; no desire for an effective force to be prepared or used against either; much groaning at patriotism and tittering at what ordinary people think holy or sensible; much irresponsible and enjoyable intellectual high spirits, coupled with much righteous indignation, also enjoyable. Much anti-elitist elitism; forests of double standards; much hatred of America; much clamor for planning, often to be executed by people who conspicuously can't plan their own lives, let alone everyone else's. . . .

I could go on. Have I already been grossly unfair to *The New Statesman*? By imputing its supposed defects and failings, its foibles and funny ways, to *The New Republic*, am I being grossly unfair to its American cousin too?

To judge from this splendid and well-edited anthology, yes, I have been very unfair indeed.

To be sure, I find most of the defects of *The New Statesman* somewhere in *The New Republic* and some quite frequently. But they are surprisingly often outnumbered and outweighed (particularly since the Second World War and still more so recently) by examples of tough, vigorous, and hard writing and thought; by a willingness to take aboard unpalatable facts and developments; by eloquent denunciations of, for instance, affirmative action and quotas as insulting and demeaning alike to those excluded and to those admitted by their perverse operations; by shrewd insights into such sensitive areas as busing, welfare dependency, race, and broken black families, which I, biased as I am, can only welcome as conservative. In all this I discern the hand of Jews (such as editor Martin Peretz), whose dreadful racial experience of twentieth-century evil has robbed them of many rosy progressive illusions they once shared.

A suspicious thought unworthily crosses my mind. Is Miss Wickenden perhaps guilty of improperly suppressing whatever by its idiocy or perversity might bring *The New Republic* into disrepute or ridicule? She was after all once its executive editor. Yet her open and friendly features on the back flap do not suggest duplicity—far from it. Nor, I guess, would anyone overzealous

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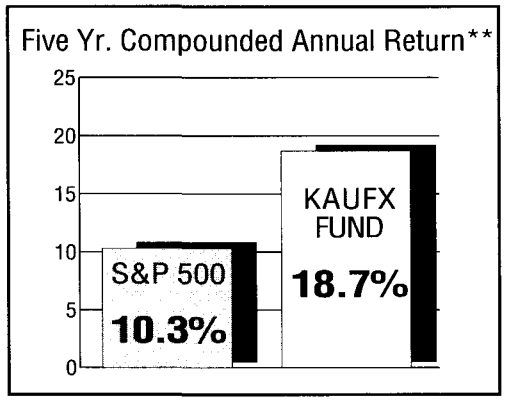

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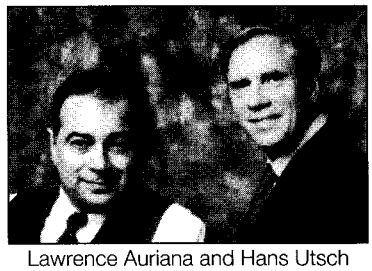

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for the reputation of *The New Republic* have reprinted, for instance, Bruce Bliven's open letter of 1938 to Stalin.

Amidst much other nonsense, Bliven took it for granted that the prospect then of fresh purges and trials made Stalin's tender heart sink. He advised Stalin accordingly to amnesty all his surviving political opponents and to organize them into a legal opposition. To silence carping critics of his own dictatorship, Stalin was urged by Bliven to withdraw from public life for a year or 18 months, having first prudently extracted guarantees from his colleagues that they would not cheat in his absence by grabbing power, but would keep his seat warm for his eventual welcome return. Some hope!

As a judge of character and actuality, Bliven seems equally unfit to edit a great magazine, which he did for years, and obsessively to destroy the character of the luckless President Harding, which he did too.

Though loftily above mere party politics, *The New Republic* has not given Republican Presidents such as Harding an easy ride. President Reagan is mercilessly and amusingly ridiculed for his involvements with astrology, extrasensory perception, precognition, sci-fi, people from other planets, "little green men," movie philosophy, and prophesies about Armageddon. Such ridicule would be more appropriate if it were not preceded by a review of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, written by Stanley Kauffmann (what, the author of the excellent *Philanderer* novel? Surely not) in such absurdly rhapsodic and starry-eyed terms as to arouse suspicions that it might be a vicious parody or the author barmy.

Again, Republican President Nixon is impressively denounced. But soon *The New Republic* is endorsing Bill Clinton, not as "the lesser of two evils," not for representing "our hopes over our fears," not as "affirming some party loyalty," but as "the best chance in a generation to bring reform and renewal," desperately needed. Can *The New Republic really* know so much against Nixon, so little against Mr. Clinton?

Miss Wickenden could also have done a service to *The New Republic*, as also to the memories of Stuart Chase and Edmund Wilson, both longtime contributors, by suppressing their shameful interchange of letters in 1932.

Wilson jeers at Chase and other squeamish American milk-and-water liberal-Bolsheviks for pointing out that the Soviet government "rules by tyranny and terror, with secret police, espionage, and arbitrary executions." So what? America, sneers Wilson, is ruled in the same way, and "personal liberty" in the U.S. is "not today worth a cent as soon as you step out of your owning-class orbit."

In his own defense, Chase in effect boasts that he is as crass as Wilson, or crasser. According to himself, he praises economic dictatorship, seldom mentions free speech, a free press, or political reform. Democracy "leaves [him] cold." He has visited Russia, was "enormously excited by the Gosplan and not at all perturbed . . . by the GPU." No milk-and-water liberal he: he rejoices to see eggs smashed, omelette or no. And Miss Wickenden, to her credit if not to Chase's or Wilson's, reprints the lot.

From left-wing but independent publicists such as Lewis Mumford and Vincent Sheean exploded furious but eloquent denunciations of *The New Republic*'s inter-war appeasement of various horrible dictators. It is to the magazine's credit that it printed them, to Miss Wickenden's that she reprints both them and *The New Republic*'s feeble rejoinders, which are *not* to its credit.

Herbert Croly, *The New Republic*'s founder, saw its purpose as "less to inform or entertain its readers than to start little insurrections in the realm of their convictions." Faithful to his ambitions, it has started little insurrections even among its own staff. The concluding item in the anthology tells how *The New Republic* doggedly supported the arming of the anti-Communist Contras in Nicaragua. No fewer than 12 of its "contributing editors" at once proclaimed their disagreement in its columns.

Should we laugh at this internal strife, resounding like the noisily embarrassing symptoms of disordered digestion? I don't laugh. It seems to me rather a symptom of whatever in *The New Republic* makes its good stuff admirable and its bad either tolerable or corrigible. □

Not Hell, Maybe Heck

NEAL B. FREEMAN

IF HARVARD Business School is the West Point of Capitalism, and Stanford is the Yale of the West, that makes Stanford Business School—what? Well, according to Peter Robinson, it's Sheer Agony and the inscription over the portals should have read, "Abandon All Hope, Ye Who Enter Here." For that's how Mr. Robinson sees himself in Palo Alto, as a poet in Hell.

Poets, in B-School lingo, are the few members of the first-year class who come, mathematically speaking, from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are career-shifting English majors or track-jumping corporate types or, in Mr. Robinson's case, speechwriters leaving the Reagan White House. At Stanford, they are up against the consultants and investment bankers who are already comfortable with spread sheets, discounted cash flows, and other quantifiable esoterica. The competition between the two cultures is dreadfully unfair and Mr. Robinson records it here at painful length.

The purpose of this volume, as Mr. Robinson says, is to answer the question: "What is business school like?" And he does. More so than most of the books in this genre—one thinks, among others, of *One L.*—*Snapshots* takes a curious, comprehensive walk through the academic year, pausing to collect perspectives from odd angles.

Snapshots from Hell: The Making of an MBA, by Peter Robinson (Warner, 286 pp., $22.95)

And given the author's tour as a phrase-maker for the Great Communicator, it's not surprising to find the tale told in crisp, post-collegiate prose.

And what is B School like?

The first year at Stanford Business School is a series of 18-hour days devoted to the study of Decision Making under Uncertainty, Computer Model-

Mr. Freeman has founded three companies. He is currently chairman of The Blackwell Corporation.

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ing, Financial Accounting, Organizational Behavior, Data Analysis—you get the idea. Stuffed with jargon and precrunched numbers, course material is not calculated to light the poet's fire. Mr. Robinson feels uninspired, overwhelmed, underprepared, and generally put upon. (One must confess to the occasional impulse to interject: "Lighten up, man. It's not the Bataan Death March.")

Mr. Robinson paints a grim picture of life at one of the country's elite business schools, but I sense that the reality may be even grimmer than that. For starters, there is nothing in the curriculum—nothing—to make the case for free markets, for the intellectual basis of the American business system. You can get all the way to an MBA from Stanford, it appears, without ever having read Hayek or Adam Smith or even Stanford's own Milton Friedman. Again, there is nothing in the curriculum (at least as far as Mr. Robinson recounts his experience) about products, or services, or innovations in either area. The course work is concerned with the maintenance of organization and the development of process. Stanford seems to be training the nation's best and brightest not to make things and sell things but to observe, to interface, to tweak, to shuffle the papers and divide the pies. The Stanford Business School seems to be turning out the functional equivalent of . . . lawyers.

Give me a poet any day. One who would stand in the well on the opening day of the first term and proclaim to the nervous students around him: "If you forget everything else you learn here, remember this. All business is modeled on the structure of the doughnut shop. There are two real jobs in the doughnut shop—the guys who make the doughnuts and the guys who sell the doughnuts. Everything else is overhead." □

The Light Brigade

MATTHEW SCULLY

WHATEVER we make of these books, it is not a good sign to see them appearing in such hurried succession, each author coming forward with a vision of the afterlife more luminous, more profound, more amazing than the last. These represent, we are told, a serious and important spiritual step forward for mankind. We are getting our first glimpse of things about which we could once only speculate. Rapturous release, dark tunnels, incomparable light, radiant Beings—it's all coming into focus. The veil is being lifted. There is a Heaven!

As a publishing phenomenon, it all began with *Closer to the Light*, written a few years ago by Melvin Morse. That book sold well and so was soon followed by his sequel, *Transformed by the Light*. Mr. Morse did not claim an otherwordly encounter himself but soberly catalogued the stories of hundreds of near-death cases. Next came the classic of the genre, Betty J. Eadie's 1992 *Embraced by the Light*, so successful that even now it tops the bestseller lists. Then *Saved by the Light*, by Dannion Brinkley, also a bestseller. He sees Mrs. Eadie one up by having died not merely once but twice, returning each time with various prophesies we ignore, he warns, at our peril. And now we have *Beyond the Light*, by Phyllis Atwater, who has trumped Mr. Brinkley with *a third* trip to higher realms.

Embraced by the Light, by Betty J. Eadie with Curtis Taylor (Gold Leaf, 147 pp., $16.95)

Saved by the Light: The True Story of a Man who Died Twice and the Profound Revelations He Received, by Dannion Brinkley with Paul Perry (Villard, 169 pp., $16)

Beyond the Light: What Isn't Being Said about Near-Death Experience, by Phyllis Atwater (Birch Lane, 409 pp., $16.95)

The suspicion is that we are seeing something very much like the current "angel" mania, with reported sightings of feathery friends throughout the

Mr. Scully, a former speechwriter for Vice President Quayle, lives in Arlington, Virginia.

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land. And of course they may well be everywhere; it's just the particular accounts you tend to doubt, and the suddenness of it all. It was easier to believe in angels before they started popping up all over. Likewise I can't shake the feeling that after another year or two of being transformed and saved and embraced the publishers and feature writers, finally bored by the light, will move on to something else.

A defense of the genre as spiritually meaningful could run as follows: sure, it has the look of another craze. But if suddenly we have all these people rushing forward with similar stories, doesn't that add weight to each account? Do their stories not corroborate each other?

Maybe—to carry this line a bit further—what is happening here is that modern science has inadvertently ratified our belief in the soul and afterlife. Perhaps we are really seeing something momentous, one of those long-awaited "convergences" of science and spirit one reads about in New Age literature. People who would once have died, period, can now be resuscitated. We have data not previously available.

Finally: yes, of course each case will seem incredible. Did God really survey all humanity for just the right prophets and come up with a guy in South Carolina (Mr. Brinkley), a housewife in rural Texas (Mrs. Eadie), and a professional psychic in Charlottesville (Mrs. Atwater)? But then again, any revelation and any prophet would strike us, in the nature of the case, as improbable and vaguely unacceptable. (Besides which, they happened to "die" and we didn't.) One does not, in sum, want to be overly credulous. But just as bad would be to shrug off the claims of perfectly upstanding people out of sheer spiritual snobbery.

On, now, to the particulars. Mr. Brinkley's prophetic assignment—as he himself regards it—began one day as he was talking on the phone during a thunderstorm. He was just about to hang up when—too late. "The next sound I heard was like a freight train coming into my ear at the speed of light." He found himself looking down on his own charred remains, as he hovered about the room as other near-death survivors report doing.

Then, a dark tunnel, and then "a paradise of brilliant light." "From immense pain I found myself engulfed by peace and tranquility." Luminous Beings appeared. He was subjected to a life review. A thorough and generally unpleasant review, Mr. Brinkley says, because for much of his time on earth he was a bully and ne'er-do-well. When the proceedings were over, he was told, in essence: wise up. Then he was escorted into an auditorium of some sort, and treated to discourses on ultimate truth.

In this "magnificent lecture hall" with a podium that glowed of "bright neon," Mr. Brinkley says, he saw historical events to come such as the fall of the Soviet Empire and the Gulf War. America would continue its economic and cultural decline; nuclear catastrophes would strike Russia in the Eighties (Chernobyl) and Norway in 1995; world depression, starvation, cannibalism.

By way of contemporaneous evidence for these prophesies, and for his newfound "psychic gifts," he says he told lots of people. It seems fair to ask why none of the prophecies appear to have been taped or written down. Only the visions beyond 1995 can be checked, until which time we will just have to wait and stay clear of Norway.

Mrs. Eadie's was a fairly conventional Christian vision, and in fact she was told that only through Christ can we come into Heaven. (The good news for non-Christians being, she reports, that those in need of it will get extra time in the afterlife to reconsider their position with the facts more fully laid out for them.)

Dying of internal bleeding in an unattended hospital room, Mrs. Eadie "felt a surge of energy. It was almost as if I felt a pop or release inside me, and my spirit was suddenly drawn out through my chest and pulled upward, as if by a giant magnet." Three spirits appeared, "guardian angels" she had known in the "eternities" before her earthly life. She hovered, exited through a window, sped across town—"only vaguely aware of trees rushing below me"—to her house and family, saw they were sad but knew that all would be well, and swiftly returned to the hospital. Her spirit friends led the way into Heaven. Around her stood Jesus and the angels, with Mrs. Eadie "hardly believing that an insignificant soul like me could be the center of so much attention." Very gently, though, He explained to Mrs. Eadie that her time had not yet come, she had work back on earth: "But first, I received a promise from each person present, including Jesus. I made them promise that the moment my mission was complete they would take me back home. . . . They agreed to my terms, and things were put in motion for my return."

LEAVE ASIDE this image of Mrs. Eadie negotiating the terms of her departure, with Jesus finally caving in to her demands. Doubtless any language borrowed from life would fail to convey what takes place in the afterlife.

But am I an earthbound dullard for doubting, among much else, the spatial element to all this—spirits floating in and out of celestial buildings, sitting down at crystal desks facing podiums, angels sitting down at "looms" producing heavenly garments? So far as I can tell, these eye-witnesses don't mean *like* a building or *like* a crystal desk or *like* a podium. They describe tangible objects you waft through or sit on.

And yet one element here does argue for the general veracity of both witnesses: their claim to have experienced guilt and Judgment. This part we cannot merely write off as some gnostic New Age adventure, the usual vision of bliss and no blisters, of finding "Christ within" or becoming gods or as gods or at one with God or what have you. They just say they found God. And yes, it turns out He really had been paying close attention to their moral, mortal choices. Lending further weight is the general absence from both books of a fashionable political message.

Here, though, you must meet Mrs. Atwater, whose *Beyond the Light* stands as a warning sign over this little patch of bliss. She helps answer the obvious question, Why are there no reports of hellish visions? Apparently there are, only these, she says, have been suppressed in favor of the "light show" people like reading about. Not everybody sees Light; some report a terrifying slide into darkness. There are even reports of "skulls" and "zombie-like people" forming a kind of arrival party.

A sobering and useful enough point, and yet from there Mrs. Atwater moves into an eerie spiritualism one vaguely sensed, in the other books, was always lurking around the next corner. Opening ourselves to the "fuller drama," we see for instance how the

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near-death experience alters the brain's physiology, enabling us to "access the hidden dimensions of Reality." Already there is evidence of "a special spiritual, visionary psyche, that may represent a new stage in the evolution of the human mind." In fact, for $2.95 a minute on her psychic counseling 900-line, Mrs. Atwater makes her own special gifts available to evolved humanity. Angels, moreover, are not real beings like in the Bible but "energy masses or pure sine wave." Also in the fuller drama: levitation and indeed the possibility of spiritual travel, such as the time Mrs. Atwater couldn't afford a plane ticket to visit a sick daughter and so instead, as she recalls in the third-person, she: "sat down in her apartment, relaxed into an altered state of consciousness, and through out-of-body or 'astral traveling' arrived via spirit form in time to view her daughter's surgery from atop the surgeons' heads looking down."

I will spare you Mrs. Atwater's "Secret Teachings." But reading *Beyond the Light*, it was revealed to me with utter certainty, as if whispered by an energy mass or pure sine wave, that this is the general drift of it all. Whatever the motives of the seers, whatever they actually experienced, it all arouses a fascination with the next life that is not ultimately very useful in this one, nor particularly healthy. Even *Embraced by the Light*, with all its sincerity and moral wisdom, in the end feeds the same gnostic curiosity with revelations of "The Laws" of the universe previously unknown. We have existed in "eternities" before our own earthly incarnation, Mrs. Eadie discovered; we "chose" our own bodies. In Heaven she saw the spirits of animals too—as did Mr. Brinkley and Mrs. Atwater. And so on. Somehow, after all the visionary rapture, we always seem to find ourselves in just this position: crouching down to have a look through celestial keyholes upon things which, even if knowable, are pretty far from our present business.

Do angels don "head dress and armor"? Did Mrs. Eadie really see the trees rushing below in a green blur on the flight home? Do we indeed get to fly about visiting friends and family before the final departure? Is there a "Hall of Knowledge" in the afterlife and is it really as crystalline and beautiful as Mr. Brinkley describes it? Are Fluffy and Rover really up there await-

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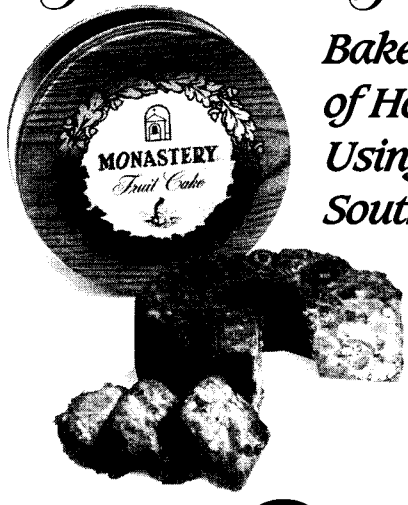

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ing us, in a place beyond this valley of kennels and scraps and "No Pets Allowed" signs?

Much as I hope so, we are probably better off just being surprised, keeping our eyes on the spiritual ball and not the bleachers, and trusting that if we attend to more pressing concerns all the necessary arrangements will be made for our arrival. Maybe it is all just this way, maybe different, maybe more wonderful. Such details do not in any case seem to preoccupy Mother Teresa or others who would appear to have the most to look forward to. Maybe the same state of unknowing is enough for us too. It is hard to see just how, when we find ourselves being escorted in for the life review, any of us will be better off for having advance knowledge of the examiner's garments or the floorplan of the room. □

That's Our Boy

JAMES GARDNER

GIVEN THE angrily dismissive reception of Mr. Ellis's new book—"as cynical, shallow, and stupid as the people it depicts," according to the *New York Times*'s Michiko Kakutani—there is a natural temptation to try to find something nice to say about it. Unfortunately, the book is bad and there is no way around that fact. But it is not without interest, precisely for the way in which it epitomizes mainstream "quality" culture of the type beloved by such people as Miss Kakutani.

Something between a collection of short stories and a novel (since a few of its many characters recur, even if only as names), *The Informers* has little plot to speak of. Mr. Ellis's powers of invention are so stunted that, aside from a few spasms of violence, which recall his controversial novel *American Psycho*, most of these 13 vignettes consist merely of situations into which their uniformly disaffected and interchangeable characters are thrown, and in which, as in this typical exchange, they carry on like second-rate method actors: "You know." "No I don't." "Yeah, you do." "No, I really don't." True, the book is written in a spare prose that rarely misses the mark of its severely limited goals. And occasionally a character such as Roger, the cynically sensible agent of voided rock star Bryan Metro, or Les, the philandering father of the pot-head Tim, will rise into life for a page or two. But then the hum of cruise control takes over once again.

***The Informers*, by Bret Easton Ellis (Knopf, 226 pp., $22)**

The Informers is set mainly in Los Angeles, that volatile crucible in which, according to contemporary mythology, inconceivable wealth and abject squalor, Olympian detachment and heart-wrenching pathos, are intermixed. Mr. Ellis's Los Angeles is a monument to an illusion, a virtual reality of swimming pools and gin-and-tonics, of Porsches and Nouvelle Cuisine. It is always fair weather in L.A. and everyone is "tall and blond and tan." Though the characters, mostly film and recording executives, their heirs, and their hangers-on, are unimaginably affluent, this affluence is presented in the most blandly matter-of-fact way: "'How's the Porsche running?' [a father asks his affectless son]. 'Um, good. It's running good,' he offers, shrugging. 'That's good.' 'How's . . . the Ferrari?'"

If, however, they participate in the good life, the characters—divorced, in therapy, or in detox—are profoundly unhappy, even though they do not always realize it. What they share, beyond affluence, is the conviction that life is an empty spectacle. This premise, none too impressive to begin with, is never developed but only reiterated: "'Nothing. There is nothing. Just forget about it,' he says again yawning. 'There's . . . nothing.' I just stand there. 'Nothing,' he says again. 'Nada.'" In the next chapter, a young woman is heading west in a train: "'Where are you going,' he asks me. 'Los Angeles,' I tell him, standing in the corridor, waiting for him to leave. 'What's in Los Angeles?' 'Nothing,' I finally say."

The Informers is one of those books, more common than generally supposed, whose characters are the sort of people who would never read them and probably never even hear about them. In fact, no one in the novel reads at all. Cultural references range from MTV to Sidney Sheldon, to Sydney Omar's astrology guides, with a few pornographic magazines thrown in. Thus the reader of this novel, in the very act of reading it, is differentiated from the people in the book. He belongs to the class of people who read Quality Lit. If Readers of Quality Lit—mostly white and upper middle class—are a small minority compared with the audience for the NFL or MTV, their ranks have been growing lately. Such readers read for the sake of a sensation of belonging. Read a book of Quality Lit, and you join a rarefied society. You are implicitly saluted as "One of Us."

There are two kinds of Quality Novels: those of such authors as John Updike and Anne Beattie, which reflect the lives of Quality Readers; and those that convey an entirely alien perspective, fortifying one's sense of belonging to a class apart. Thus Cormac McCarthy brings us news from the Southwest, Jessica Hagedorn teaches us about growing up in the Philippines, and Amy Tan grants us a peek at the Chinese-American experience. Though written in presumptive solidarity with their subjects, such novels were created with the readers of Quality Lit in mind. Cormac McCarthy's cowboys, in other words, would never read a Cormac McCarthy novel. And so it is with the characters in *The Informers*. Mr. Ellis grants us a glimpse of their lives, in the complicit expectation that their lives and ours are utterly different.

And yet, for all that, Mr. Ellis does not always seem "One of Us." He is not assimilable in the way Amy Tan or Jessica Hagedorn is. What fueled Michiko Kakutani's rage in the *New York Times* was the suspicion that Mr. Ellis may actually side more with his characters than with right-thinking people such as herself. Clearly he finds his characters stupid and inauthentic. The

Mr. Gardner is the author of Culture or Trash? *(Birch Lane).*

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question becomes: is he for stupidity and inauthenticity or against them?

More importantly, *The Informers* exemplifies a trend in contemporary culture, what the French call a "*délectation morose*," a fascination with cruelty, abjection, and decay. Although this recurring theme in Western culture was largely in abeyance during and after the Second World War, postmodernism brought it back in full force. In addition to the fiction of Mr. Ellis, J. G. Ballard, and Patrick McGrath, this morbidity is evident in the distasteful cruelty of such films as *Reservoir Dogs*, *Bad Lieutenant*, and *Goodfellas*, and, among visual artists, in the photography of Joel Peter Witkin and Andres Serrano, wherein actual corpses are "artfully" arranged.

At first it might seem paradoxical that there is such an element of cruelty in contemporary culture, since, by all accounts, our society aspires to be the most conscientiously altruistic collectivity ever seen. This neurotic attention to the sensitivities of others is what political correctness is all about. How could such an age engender both Amy Tan and Bret Easton Ellis, both of them being equally typical of their age? Because both of them are implicit challenges to the male, pale, middle-class world that has no use for quality fiction. What Amy Tan achieves through an excess of feelingfulness, Bret Easton Ellis accomplishes through extreme disregard for the feelings, indeed, at times for the basic human rights, of others. In their diametrical opposition they become almost identical, and it is this fact that ultimately makes Mr. Ellis, however much "we" may protest, "One of Us." □

FILM

Enduring the Indies

JOHN SIMON

WE TEND to look to the independents for a relief from the majors, but, in film, the minor leaguers have their own ways of letting us down. Two of them are currently garnering good reviews even as they flounder with their admittedly off-beat material, which, to my view, sticks more in the craw than in the consciousness.

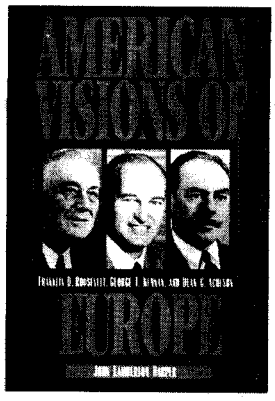
In 1990, Whit Stillman made a bit of a stir with *Metropolitan*, a comedy about the trivial traumas of debutantes and their escorts on the Park Avenue–Southampton axis. It seemed refreshing to have a young filmmaker who was unabashedly chronicling the tribulations of well-heeled WASPs rather than the aches and rages of various other minorities. Yet *Metropolitan* looked rather more impoverished than its subject matter warranted, and its invention was, at best, spotty. But Mr. Stillman was clearly his own man, possessed of a somewhat uneven but amiably idiosyncratic sense of humor.

He still is that with ***Barcelona,*** a comedy about two cousins who had a huge row at age ten, which pops up occasionally in flashback and adds little to the story. Now Ted is a sales rep from a Chicago company in Barcelona, where he is suddenly descended upon by cousin Fred, a junior naval officer here as an advance man for the Sixth Fleet. The time is the last decade of the Cold War, and NATO and Americans are powerfully unpopular in Spain, even though liberated young Spanish women put out for them rather liberally.

What Mr. Stillman has is a good situation, but no story. The movie is composed of slightly flaccid blackout skits, each of which could easily have been summed up by a *New Yorker* cartoon. The screenplay, if that is the word for it, tries to connect them, as if they were so many points in one of those by-the-numbers drawings to be joined by a counting pencil. But no picture emerges: the points could just as well have been random spots on a blank wall.

Ted tries to get rid of Fred, but Fred stays on and on. They bicker; they philosophize about feminine beauty, the tactics of salesmanship, and America's presence in Europe; and they do not really do much of anything. Ted works in a nice Art Nouveau office, but it is not clear at what; what Fred might possibly be accomplishing for the Navy is

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*



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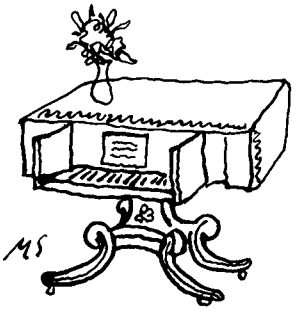
they amble around Barcelona a lot, which is a pretty sight but gets us nowhere; at night, they go to jazz concerts, drink, dance, and debate with some fetching Spanish girls, and eventually go to bed with them, even though most of the girls have steady Spanish boyfriends. The chitchat between the cousins is sometimes amusing; the conversations and arguments between the Americans and Spaniards are less so, though they have a mild ironic edge. And every once in a while there is a spurt of political violence.

The few authentic Hispanics in the film speak an English that is barely comprehensible and grating; the girls, however, played by Americans with more or less convincing Spanish accents (mostly less), are easy on the eye, but no more believable than Ted and Fred. The views from a passing car of the Cathedral lit up at night are about as exciting as the movie gets. When someone hovers between life and death—or survival as a vegetable—we do not much care. Even at their best, these characters do little more than vegetate, though, unlike other household plants, you do not have to talk to them: *they* talk *your* head off.



To say that these superficial shadow-characters remain unexplored is a gross understatement. But nothing else is explored either: even a key theft is never satisfactorily cleared up. Money matters are treated in a particularly cavalier and vague manner, which may give the film a certain raffish insouciance. And there are some funny situations and intermittently funny lines. *Barcelona* also looks less home-movieish than *Metropolitan*. It is, however, even more disjointed.

The acting is not especially good or bad, but entirely apposite. Chris Eigeman, as Fred, may overdo the wide-eyed but unseeing stare in what would otherwise be an apt blend of self-righteousness and one-upmanship. He is droll the way the young Jack Nicholson used to be, but without his charm. Taylor Nichols is better as Ted, a sort of sophisticated nerd looking like a younger, gentrified Robert Duvall. The main girls, Tushka Bergen and Mira Sorvino, are attractive and likable, but have virtually nothing to do. *Barcelona* is the work of a clever, upbeat smartass, but hardly an artist. Though Mr. Stillman has spent some time in that city, and his American wife lived there even longer, the film could as readily have been made by a casual tourist; the great Catalan capital deserves better than that. But Mr. Stillman is consistent, flattening out his backgrounds as thoroughly as he does his characters.

■ Even so, *Barcelona* is a lot easier to take than the currently much-touted ***Spanking the Monkey***, written and directed by the "young" David O. Russell, who, at 35, should know better. It is a film made on a financial as well as intellectual shoestring, and it shows it in every frame. If art lies in the concealing of art, as the Latin proverb has it, the art of shoestringery lies in hiding the shoestring. Here even the cinematography by Michael Mayers looks inept, possibly for reasons of financial limitations. But the cheapness in the writing, directing, and acting cannot be explained away in economic terms.

We have here the by now obligatory dysfunctional family, the Aibellis: father Tom is a traveling salesman for self-help video cassettes, always on the road, always in hotel rooms where a naked chippie seems to be part of the furniture. He is also a miser, tyrant, and fool, preventing his pre-med-student son, Raymond, from availing himself of a prestigious Washington summer scholarship, and forcing him instead to stay in their suburban Connecticut home taking care of his mother. Susan Aibelli has a broken leg in a cast, and a neglected wife's bruised ego casting about for compensation: Ray is to be her nurse, cook, sounding board, unpaid lady's companion, and, as it happens, bedmate. For, among other improbable things, *Spanking the Monkey* is about incest.

Incest is a difficult subject, to be accosted only by the greatest of artists. Even as good a filmmaker as Louis Malle treated it charmingly but unsatisfactorily in *Murmur of the Heart* (1970), turning incest into something as inconsequential as a mother and son drinking a cup of coffee from the same cup. *Monkey* strives to provide the equally briefly and irresponsibly treated incest with at least a more elaborate buildup, so we get endless massagings of the maternal leg and proppings up and pawings of the maternal body in the shower, along with appropriate oglings, wisecracks, and heavy breathing, but not a shred of genuine empathy or insight. These huffings and puffings are no more persuasive than the scenes of onanism that give the film its title, and are so poorly contrived and executed as to make it hard to tell whether the numerous tortuous and tasteless scenes on the toilet have to do with masturbation or with constipation.

Yet as whenever Ray retires to the bathroom for the eponymous pursuit, Frank, the family dog, whines and nuzzles away at the bathroom door until Ray admits him, the film lapses repeatedly into a tedious quasi-coitus interruptus—spoiling the mongrel rather than spanking the monkey. Alas, masturbation may be an even tougher cinematic topic than incest. Of course, there are other plot elements, too, such as two attempts by Ray to commit suicide—one comic, one dramatic—but both equally unsuccessful: Raymond is as much of a bust as a *felo-de-se* as Mr. Russell is as a filmmaker. There is also a youthful proto-romance with the neighboring psychiatrist's daughter (credibly played by Carla Gallo), but here, too, the authorial clumsiness precludes anything insightful, touching, or new.

Mr. Russell is, alas, less than lucky with his actors. Although Benjamin Hendrickson gets the father's loony self-contradictions across well enough, the other principals come up short. Alberta Watson, as the mother, wallows in a petulantly fixed stare for minutes on end, which becomes especially monotonous because it is shot mostly from the same angle (left semi-profile). But she fails to elicit sympathy for Susan, so that her solicitations of devotion from Ray are no more moving, and rather less funny, than Frank the dog's pesky tantrums at the bathroom door. As for Jeremy Davies, his Ray is nothing more than a nastier, less charming post-Tarkingtonian Penrod.

■ The best cinematic offering of the summer is not a picture but a performance. ***It Could Happen to You*** is a harmless but silly piece of sentimental twaddle, even if it is based on a true

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story about a policeman who, lacking cash for a waitress's tip, promises the young woman half of his potential winnings from a lottery ticket, the only thing he can find in his wallet. When he wins millions, the decent cop, over the protests of his selfish, vulgar wife, divides them with the sweet, incredulous waitress.

The oafish Nicholas Cage is just barely bearable as the cop; the untalented Rosie Perez is worse than ever as the wife. But as the waitress, Bridget Fonda gives one of the truest, finest cinematic performances I have ever seen. Miss Fonda has been going from strength to strength in all kinds of roles both good and not good (only in the wretched *Little Buddha* was it impossible even for her to score). Here she infuses the part of a nice, simple, honest loser who suddenly becomes a winner with such spontaneous decency, such profoundly unsappy outgoingness, such a rich and authentic range of emotion and evocation, as to have left me struggling simultaneously with laughter, tears, and for breath. Everyone should see this performance by a great actress; to say it deserves the Academy Award would be an insult: the Academy Awards are nowhere near good enough for *it*. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

In Defense of Elitism, by William A. Henry III (Doubleday, 224 pp., $20)

THIS book could conceivably effect the rehabilitation of a much-maligned word. For most of its history, "elitism" lived as a useful tag meaning the will to separate the good from the less good, the superior from the inferior. As Mr. Henry—*Time*'s art critic until his recent untimely death—rightly says, such "discrimination" did not necessarily bespeak political or social bias, but rather common sense. This book will likely satisfy the many who have suffered in discomfited silence as standards of quality and achievement have come under the gaze of those who would erase them in the name of compassion. Mr. Henry tackles affirmative action, feminism, multicultural fabrications, and other aspects of PC. But there's a toxic subtext to his otherwise able and lively explication. Assuring us that he isn't a "right-winger" or "nut"—and billing himself as "a card-carrying member of the ACLU"—he describes his mostly sound definition of a "superior" culture. In so doing he genuflects to liberal idols when he says that his preferred culture would include a "rational acceptance of birth control," which pretty well disqualifies just about all pre-modern cultures; when he asserts that it must "provide widespread, rigorous general education" (so far so good) so that its people aren't left in (get this) "agrarian ignorance"; and when he declares that "religious domination of a society is plainly backward and maladaptive in the modern world," missing the point that it's the modern world that has ushered in the rot decried by Mr. Henry, not religion.

—TRACY LEE SIMMONS

Seductive Cinema: The Art of Silent Film, by James Card (Knopf, 304 pp., $35)

FROM boyish enthusiasm to nostalgic affection Professor Card has enjoyed a lifelong love affair with silent movies. He turned his passion into a career, becoming probably the most distinguished collector, archivist, and expositor of those fragile shadow-plays. This amiably written, lavishly illustrated volume is in part a love letter, in part autobiography, starting with a warm evocation of Cleveland in the 1920s, when the silents were just approaching their zenith. Into this relaxed narrative Mr. Card weaves his personal impressions and forcible opinions of a number of people and topics prominent in the story; he is iconoclastic about D. W. Griffith and Erich von Stroheim, recognizes the greatness of Cecil B. DeMille, and spotlights the performers whom he knew best and admired most—Joan Crawford, Gloria Swanson, John Barrymore, Norma Shearer, Greta Garbo. Having left behind long ago the intellectual snobbery that favors foreign films and silent films for all the wrong reasons, he cheerfully scorns the kind of highbrow represented by a young professor of cinematography who, when asked what he taught, replied "the semiology of the Clone Image." And he supplies much interesting and practical information, such as the forgotten fact that silent films were meant to be projected at varying speeds to suit the course of the action.

—ANTHONY LEJEUNE

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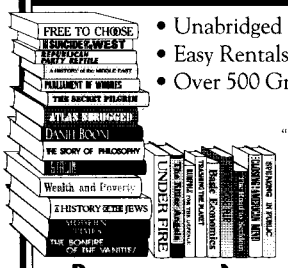

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MARKMAN

(Continued from page 77)

tury in the United States which they believe to have been erroneous. Presumably, these would be among the most compelling cases for the authors' proposition. Yet in each of the cases where there is a record to review, there are eyewitnesses, confessions, physical evidence, and circumstantial evidence in support of the defendant's guilt. The authors' claims that the defendants were later "found" or "proven" to be innocent are utterly unpersuasive.

Concededly, it can be a difficult task to raise reasonable doubts about guilt in long-forgotten cases, let alone to prove innocence. However, it is Bedau and Radelet who argue that existing law should be changed because of an identifiable harm; accordingly, they bear the burden of producing credible evidence that the harm exists. It is hard to imagine their evidence satisfying such a burden, except for Justice Blackmun.

None of this is to deny the legitimacy of arguments against the death penalty predicated upon moral opposition. Yet these arguments are not at the core of what either Bedau and Radelet or Justice Blackmun argues. Bedau has written elsewhere that it is "false sentimentality to argue that the death penalty ought to be abolished because of the abstract possibility that an innocent person might be executed when the record fails to disclose that such cases occur." Justice Blackmun, too, does not argue in terms of the inevitability of error but rather on the grounds that the present system is incapable of delivering "reliable sentences of death."

While the most inveterate opponents of capital punishment are not influenced by whether or not it is administered in a "reliable" fashion, Bedau and Radelet sought to develop a broader base of opposition to the death penalty. Justice Blackmun, who in the past did not join his former colleagues William Brennan and Thurgood Marshall in moral opposition to capital punishment under all circumstances, reflects this intended audience. Those who look at the Bedau–Radelet study with an open mind, however, will see that it speaks eloquently about the extraordinary rarity of error in capital punishment. □

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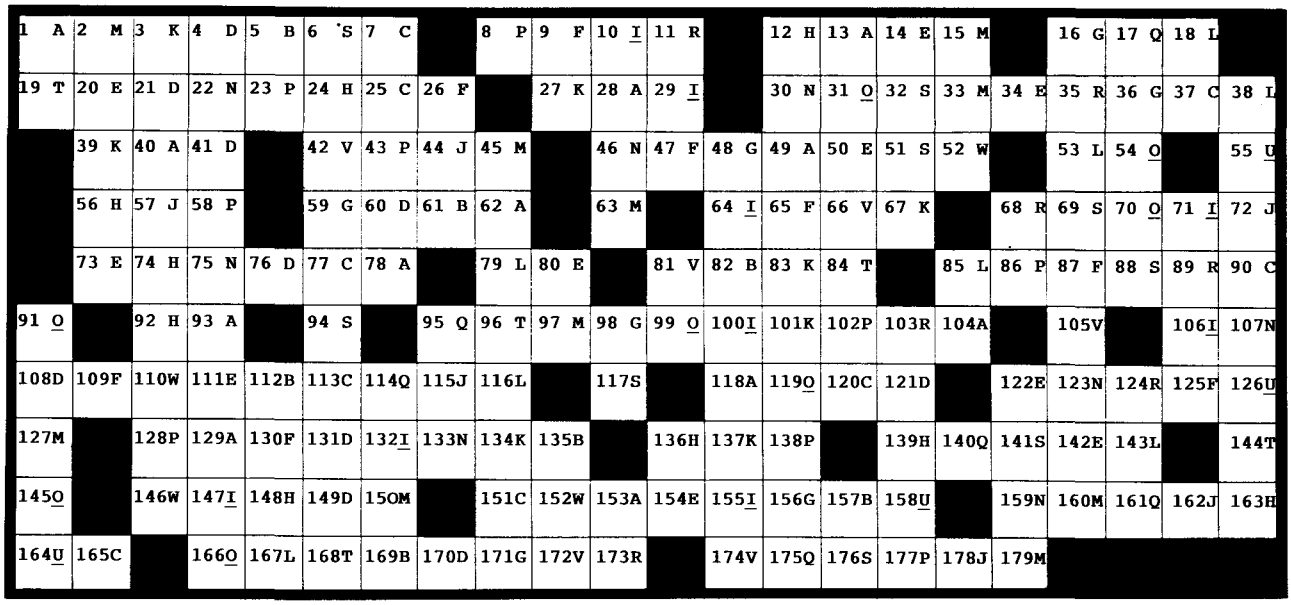

DEFINITIONS

A. Marksman — 93 62 40 104 118 49 28 129 153 1 / 13 78

B. Coaching tactic — 169 112 157 82 135 5 61

C. Donkeys' foes — 77 90 25 151 7 113 37 165 120

D. A formal, sometimes even divine, visit — 149 170 41 60 121 21 76 131 4 108

E. Symbolic — 80 20 154 111 50 122 14 142 34 73

F. Abode — 26 65 87 47 109 9 130 125

G. Hugely impressive — 16 59 156 171 98 48 36

H. Yard aid — 148 92 136 24 56 163 139 74 12

I. Democratic institutions — 71 155 29 106 132 100 147 10 64

J. Loudmouthed oafs — 72 57 162 178 115 44

K. Reagan ally — 67 137 101 27 134 39 83 3

L. Certain lunchpail types — 85 53 116 18 79 167 38 143

M. All of us — 150 63 179 45 2 15 160 127 97 33

N. One kind of crane — 159 46 123 107 30 133 75 22

O. Aerial sites — 31 70 145 91 99 119 166 54

P. Eye specialists — 138 128 102 23 177 86 43 58 8

Q. Floating on the surface — 95 140 161 175 17 114

R. Blessing — 68 103 124 11 89 173 35

S. City in west Texas (2 words) — 88 94 176 117 141 6 32 51 69

T. Drains — 144 19 168 96 84

U. Stellar display, Major or Minor — 164 126 158 55

V. Melee — 66 174 172 42 105 81

W. Cousins, or closer, to pines — 52 110 152 146

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. ROBERT NOVAK: *The Two-by-four:* "Worried Democratic members of Congress returned from their Fourth of July recess so panicky about what their constituents told them that they are ready to abandon anti-death sentence maneuvers in order to pass a crime bill."

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WTO Coming Up

NEW YORK, AUGUST 16

The crime bill and the health bill have sheltered the GATT/WTO bill. To crawl out of the acronymic mud, we are talking about the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the World Trade Organization. Last November, Congress voted to endorse GATT. That was a pretty close call—it made it through Congress only by Republican heft. But it got through and presents us now with a World Trade Organization. It comes to us on a "fast track," which means that Congress, as was the case with NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), cannot change its provisions; it is all or nothing at all.

Once again there is a curious coalition opposing the WTO. Ralph Nader is very conspicuous on the scene, as also Pat Buchanan. Ralph Nader, the Closest Friend of the American consumer, finds himself on an awkward side of the question given that free trade is the most consumer-oriented thing in town. Mr. Nader opposes the WTO, one suspects, because the labor unions are protracting their quarrel against free trade. Pat Buchanan protracts his own quarrel against free trade by raising the question of sovereignty. But so does Congressman Newt Gingrich, a profoundly committed free trader. And the cat is now among the pigeons, because if Newt nixes WTO, it is nixed, period. The Clinton vote is not enough. Here are the questions:

1. If the WTO is going to supersede any U.S. laws that contravene it, why is it a matter for Congress to decide by a majority vote? Shouldn't it be subjected to the treaty process, requiring approval by two-thirds of the Senate? There is considerable opinion to that effect, including that of Laurence Tribe of Harvard and Bruce Fein of the *Washington Times*. Others argue that the House of Representatives is the most logical body to weigh in on what is after all a covenant that has to do with getting and spending. It is, moreover, a world trade agreement whose particulars have been formed by intense negotiation over three Administrations: Reagan, Bush, and Clinton.

2. The question of sovereignty is not easily dealt with. The WTO gives all 117 signatories an equal vote, which is another way of saying that United States parliamentary leverage is approximately zero. But what the WTO would be called upon to decide is whether a member nation was violating the terms of GATT. Inasmuch as the United States has been the primary plaintiff in the trade wars of the past generation, we have to suppose we'd have more to gain than to lose by submitting to a panel of WTO judges on whether the rules for free trade were being violated. If we are creating an organization that can bring muscle to free up trade, we will be the outstanding beneficiaries.

On the other hand, we have in prospect an international organization which will have the authority to rule that the United States has violated provision XYZ of the GATT agreement, that the United States must instantly comply. If the U.S. refuses to do so, then the WTO can levy a compensatory judgment or impose trade sanctions.

It is all but inconceivable that foreign nations would gang up to force trade sanctions against the United States for the obvious reason that it would hurt the disciplinarians more than it would hurt us. If Grenada decides not to export to the U.S., we can struggle along with three fewer pineapples. If France decides not to export to the U.S., France will drown in its own grapes. As a realistic matter, it is unlikely that trade sanctions will be used against the major economic powers.

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What pricks the curiosity of Newt Gingrich is the kind of thing Mickey Kantor, Mr. Clinton's trade representative, goes in for. He is a lightning rod for idealistic and ideological interventions of the kind the environmentalists specialize in. We don't want a situation in which we are dictated to on matters of ecological hygiene. And as a matter of fact, we don't want a situation in which we dictate to others on these questions.

That is what the debate should center on. Are we encouraging the birth of a pestiferous bureaucracy that gets into the act, when all we want is a free flow of goods from here to there, and from there to here? It is good that Mr. Gingrich is the captain of the Republican team on this question, since his instincts are well-marshalled. He is for free trade, and for American sovereignty over its own affairs. □

Useful Idiots

NEW YORK, AUGUST 5

It came like the rush of a mint julep on a hot summer day—Eric Breindel's calm dissection of the Leonard Bernstein–J. Edgar Hoover scandal. What that was all about was the publication in the *New York Times* of acres of FBI reports on the activity of the great musician–conductor, under the headline, "The FBI Spied on Bernstein for Decades/Seeking, but Not Finding, Communist Ties." What *New York Post* Editor Breindel concluded, after evaluating the record, was that the political Bernstein was a fine example of what Lenin identified as a "useful idiot."

Now about this apparently endless retailing of FBI files on musicians and writers a few things need to be said:

1. We all know by now that J. Edgar Hoover was a hopeless paranoid. Natalie Robins published last year in her book *Alien Ink*, accounts collected by the FBI on dozens, indeed hundreds, of writers. Among them, I pause to note, was—me. I had been on the list of the Director's 10 Most Prominent Young Americans Who Love Their Country, Their Flag, and the FBI but in 1967 *National Review* published a lampoon issue featuring the news events that would most satisfy the quintessential liberal ("Papal Encyclical Abandons 1870s Infallibility Rule" . . . "Chambers Typewriter Forger Confesses" . . . "Viet Situation Worsens: Saigon Pullout Rumors as Anti-Ky Riots Spread"). One of the stories had J. Edgar

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Hoover arrested in a YMCA men's room. From that moment on (Mr. Hoover sent out the word): I was not to be trusted. All I had established was that Mr. Hoover's funny bone was inactive.

2. That Hoover went to ridiculous lengths in his monitoring of the activities of Communists, fellow travelers, and their dupes tells only one side of the story, namely that he went to ridiculous lengths. It does not tell the other side, namely that the Justice Department was legitimately interested in the activity of pro-Communists and their satellites.

We in the United States had a relatively easy go of it after the Second World War. Unlike Italy and France we didn't have a huge Communist Party. But, like England, we had a whole lot of pretty important spies. And in 1948 we had a functioning political party that ran a presidential candidate endorsed by a thousand literati who were beguiled into thinking that Mr. Truman's determination to contain Communist imperialism was belligerent, fascistic, and dangerous. Henry Wallace went down to a thundering defeat, but this was in part because of the tough journalistic exposure of the background of the Wallace moment. It transpired during the summer of 1948 that the Progressive Citizens of America was a Communist front. The information collected to make that hugely important political point was brought together by congressional investigating committees and by Attorneys General who pronounced a number of organizations as devoted not to health or civil liberties or peace or the environment, but to advancing the Communist Party line.

3. Leonard Bernstein emerges, in Mr. Breindel's analysis, as the archetypal idiot savant. He was, to give only one example, a patron of American Youth for Democracy, an organization that, to use the *Times*'s words, "honored him with awards and receptions." Well, the AYD was sired by the Young Communist League and never deviated from the Party line. If the Attorney General is going to arrive at well-informed judgments about the true purposes of an organization designed to corral idiot savants into service for a foreign country, then he has to accumulate information about such organizations. Attorney General Francis Biddle did exactly that, at the expense of American Youth for Democracy; but Leonard Bernstein paid no attention and as late as 1988 was denouncing Joe McCarthy as the principal agent of tyranny in modern times. Bernstein never got around to giving his public his views of Soviet tyranny.

4. But the most interesting point. What happened to Bernstein? Well, the same thing that happened to me. Nothing. The publication, since the Freedom of Information Act, of the records of all the people Mr. Hoover kept a file on doesn't demonstrate, far from it, that they were all (we were all) Communists and traitors. What it absolutely established is that to be listed with the FBI was about as dangerous as being listed with the Garden Club of America. □

Fog and More Fog

NEW YORK, AUGUST 12

The Mitchell substitute health-care bill is so complicated the Congressional Budget Office required weeks to analyze its salient probable effects. We learn that in the year 2000, when a trigger mechanism activates a variety of measures in those states that have not by that date achieved the desired coverage, Americans who come under the heaviest range of fire of the Mitchell bill could find themselves keeping 15 cents out of every dollar they earn.

Etc., etc., etc. We are always learning, and always forgetting, that Congress cannot pass an act affecting only the target in mind. You cannot raise the federal minimum wage of some Americans without diminishing the wages of other Americans; and you cannot promulgate "free" health care without fettering much that is now free.

But all of this has become difficult to explain because of the root superstition so much of the public suffers from, a legacy of the Second World War when, in order to escape wage and price controls, employers began to confer health benefits on workers. The IRS winked at the practice, indeed collaborated in the deception by allowing the employee to receive the benefits without paying taxes on them. Employers were of course permitted to deduct the health benefits, as they should have done, given that they were a cost of doing business. But the myth was born, and no substantial effort has been made during the long debate of the last nine months to deflate it.

Ten days ago Senator Bob Dole was asked directly: "Do you believe that employers should provide health benefits to their workers?" Here was a perfect opportunity to affirm economic reality, but Dole let it pass. His answer was, "Yes." And so the subject went back to: "employer mandates."

But of course employers do not in fact pay for health care. What they do is sidetrack a sum of money earned by the employee, designating it for health insurance. If John McGuire is paid $35,000 by General Motors and receives also a health-insurance policy worth $3,500, General Motors is not paying McGuire $35,000. It is paying $38,500. General Motors is not in the business of providing health care. It is paying its workers what the workers earn, and cooperating to shelter that part of the salary that goes for health care. Employer "mandates" are hallucinations.

All Senator Dole needed to say was that American business has got to pay its workers what their time and effort are worth. Whether the employee then goes on to buy health insurance is another question.

He could have said that buying health insurance is a question in which the government is legitimately interested, even as the government is interested in requiring U.S. citizens to go to school. Accordingly the government should ordain that medical expenses are tax deductible, as also savings reserved for medical emergency. Government can reasonably stipulate that such deductions and immunities are available only to the worker who can show that he has taken out insurance against medical catastrophe. Mr. McGuire, under such an arrangement, would receive $3,500 more in pay than he now does. Five hundred dollars of this could buy his catastrophe insurance, the balance put into a fund or into a health policy on which he could draw as he saw fit to cover medical expenses. Whatever was left over at the end of the year would be—his.

What of those who are unemployed? Or whose earnings are so meager as to leave them without the surplus needed to buy health insurance?

This surely is the problem the nation should be confronting. Instead we are asked to revise the structure of the medical universe.

An observer recently remarked that the Republicans want everything the Democrats want, at eighty per cent of the cost. That is the impression we get, notwithstanding the manifest improvements of Republican alternatives to the bills currently under consideration. There is at least some public sense that Congress is moving thoughtlessly. Some 65 per cent of the American people want to wait a year, give the matter more thought. But when Senator Helms suggested exactly that, he was turned down, 54–46. As ever, Congress and the people have different priorities. But maybe on election day the voting public will be more assertive. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Oh, Sparta!

A CORNERSTONE of Western thought that has vanished without a trace is admiration for ancient Sparta.

Essayists of centuries past, secure in their manhood and steeped in classical education, extolled Spartan discipline and self-control. Their commentaries inspired generations of schoolboys to pen compositions in praise of the Spartan lad who flinched not as the fox gnawed his vitals, and shaped the American beau ideal of the "strong silent type." To call a man laconic, from Sparta's formal name, "Lacedaemon," was to crown him with laurels.

Now it would be an insult, if the word even existed, which it doesn't—it's vanished, too. Feminist assaults on male emotional containment and ten million women's mag articles called "How to Get Him to Open Up" at last have achieved their fiendish goal. The male's "Y" chromosome has come to stand for "yap." Men now talk even more than women, and being the bigger, stronger sex, they are making the non-stop human voice a greater weapon of torture than it has ever been. If they don't shut up I'm going to run away and join the ladies' auxiliary of the French Foreign Legion.

I can no longer bear to watch *Crossfire*, a show inspired by Pat Buchanan's boyhood dinner table. The whole family must have ulcers. Soon I won't be able to watch anything, because men are slipping into Southern-belle locutions. "Never, ever, as long as I live!" she trills, to which the guilty bureaucrat replies, "I'm very, very, very sorry," while O.J. pleads, "Absolutely one hundred percent not guilty!" and Bill Clinton insists, "No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!"

Many men who would rather not yap are forced to by the demands of positivism and other insidious practices of Nice Guyism, such as the need to prove their sincerity. Listening to sincere men talk is like trying to get chewing gum off the sole of a shoe.

They also are lured into garrulousness by the kind of questions put to them. Our therapeutic age is hostile to declarations of action emerging from clear thought, so we have developed a new verb tense, the Recumbent Ruminative. Barbara Walters would never ask the Spartan lad, "What did you do?" but rather, "What went through your mind when you saw the fox dragging your intestines across the field?"

Another cause of the Forced Yap is the proliferation of professions in a democracy. A craftsman is quiet, e.g., the mechanic grunting softly to himself while he peers under the hood. But the first word in "professional" is "profess," and it has become a *carte blanche* that goes with white collars.

Betty Friedan wrote that housework expands to fill the time available. Similarly, yapping expands to fill the widening abyss in our body politic. The worse things get, the more men heed the internalized command, "Gentlemen, start your analogies."

The leader of a nation exemplified by "E pluribus unum" is, by definition, a man of few words, but when this ideal is corrupted to "Ex uno plures," he must constantly spell out his mission by vowing to be the President [governor, mayor] "of all the people," a gaseous cliché guaranteed to turn him into a compulsive oral list maker.

"Growing in office" means doing the wrong thing for the wrong reason, which takes a lot more explaining than doing the wrong thing for the right reason or the right thing for the wrong reason. "Incorporating dissenting views" takes twice as long as "sending a message," and "sharing thoughts" takes twice as long as incorporating dissenting views. Betraying "a lack of conviction" means yapping harder to prove otherwise, and being "willing to listen" means somebody else is yapping.

"Seeking balance [consensus, accord]" is especially fatal. When people look for something they're usually quiet about it, but when the verb changes to seek you can bet somebody is yapping. Emile Zola became the conscience of mankind when he barked "*J'accuse!*" but U.S. Yap, sworn to be "non-judgmental," becomes the bane of existence when he prattles, "I would like to utilize this opportunity to neutralize the opposition." Listening to his squishy monologues about "conflict resolution" and "the politics of persuasion," I find myself wondering: Whatever happened to keel hauling and trial by ordeal?

THE PROCESS of emasculation is cumulative; when men take on one female trait, others follow. It is no accident that the yappiest administration in our history is also the one that hides behind women's skirts: Clinton behind Hillary's and Janet Reno's, and now Roger Altman behind Jean Hanson's.

And what of the opposition? Insurrections, civil wars, and revolutions are mounted by angry young men, but if ours are anywhere near the barricades they have a cellular phone in one hand. America is primed for a revolution but we probably won't have one for a while because Jacques is too busy yapping on the phone with Rush Limbaugh.

Yapping is keeping the peace but frustration is building. Eventually, male yappers will feel self-disgust, as men always do when they see themselves behaving like women. It's already begun. Men always find a "real man's" way to do things, and On Line is becoming the real man's way of talking. The messages may be garrulous but at least they are silent. —FLORENCE KING

"You're not crazy, Mrs. Timkin. But I think you may be a carrier."

St. Martin's will publish The Florence King Reader, *an anthology, early next year.*

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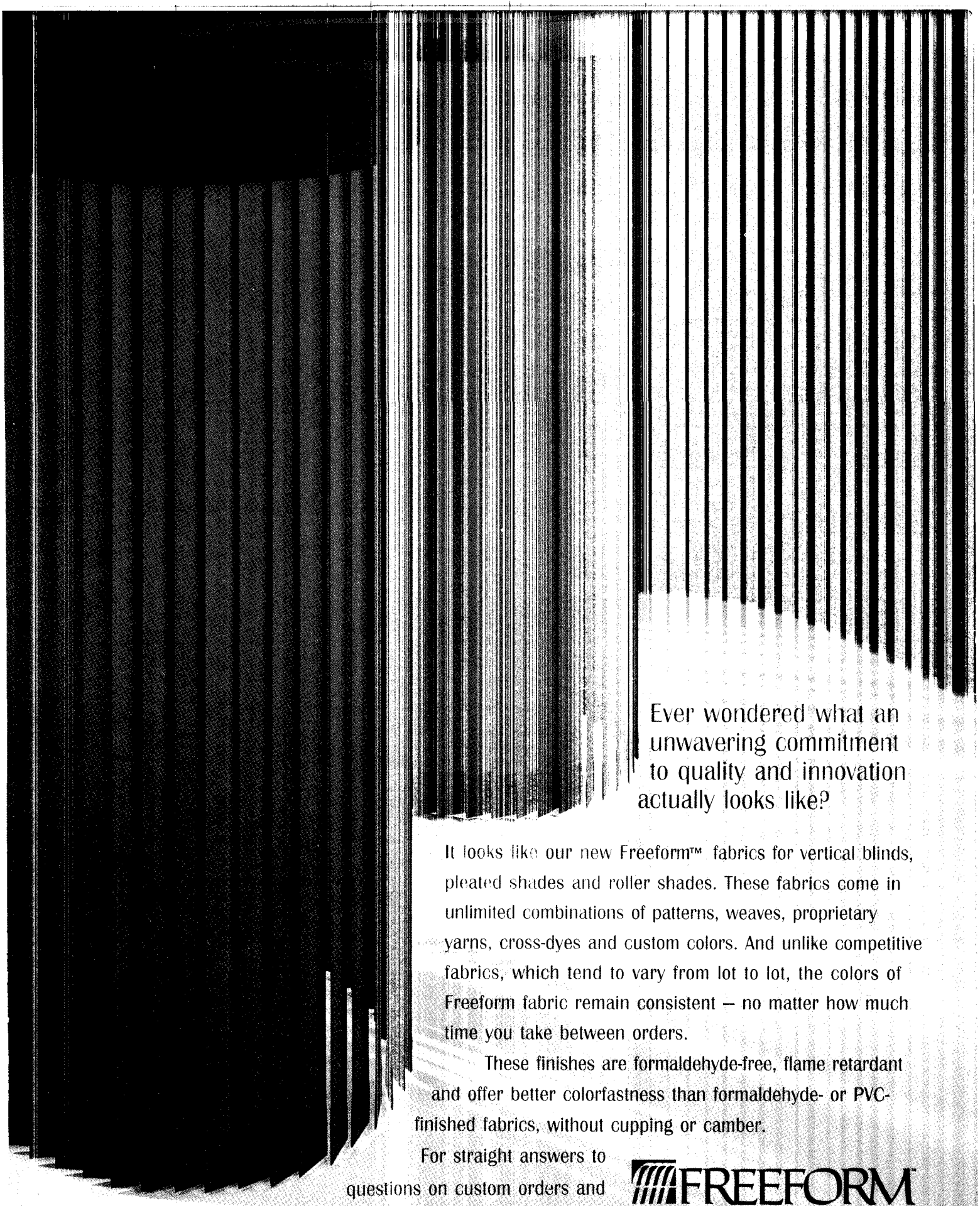

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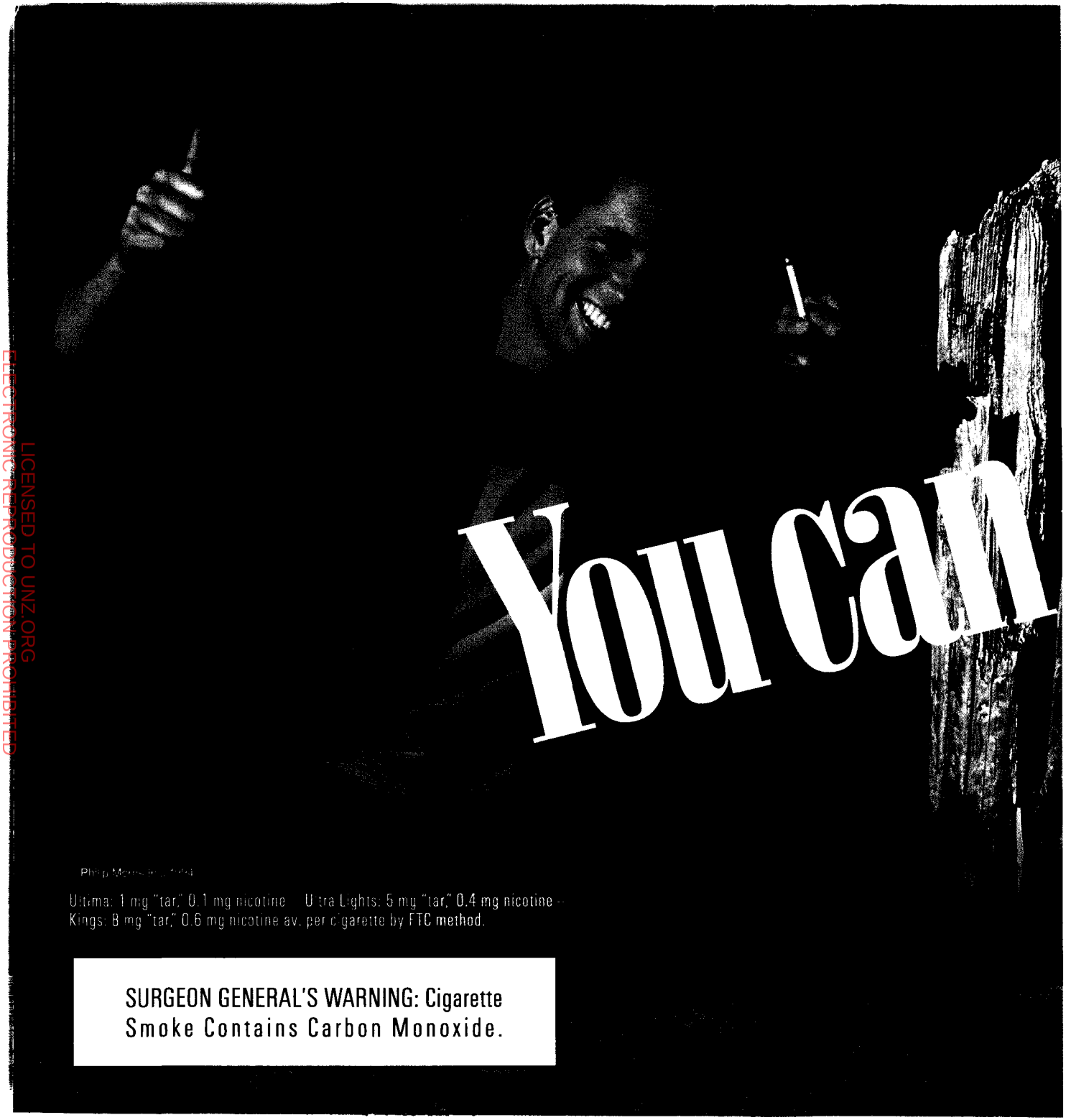

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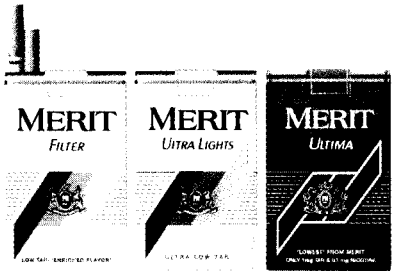

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